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THE
C I V I L
AND THE
ECCLESIASTICAL
SYSTEMS
OF
E N G L A N D
DEFENDED AND FORTIFIED,

Injurioso ne pede proruas
Stantem columnam; neu populus fremens,
Ad arma cessantes, ad arma
Concijet, imperiumque frangat. Hor.

L O N D O N :

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THE
BRITISH MUSEUM
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THE
CIVIL
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SYSTEMS, &c.

EVERY time one surveys the condition of the people of England, the advantages which accrue to them from "their happy Constitution in Church and State," appear manifold and eminent. With just notions of the value of their constitution; and with becoming sentiments of respect for it; the minds of His Majesty's subjects ought to be deeply impressed. In throwing together the following pages, therefore, my primary objects are, to convince my fellow citizens, that, notwithstanding the important revolutions that have taken place in other countries, during the present age, no people in the world have more reason to be satisfied with their constitutional allotment than they have;

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and,

and, to induce them to admit, that, “ whether the
 “ American constitution be the best constitution for
 “ the Americans, or not ; and whether the French
 “ constitution be the best for Frenchmen, or not ;
 “ the English constitution is the best for Englishmen,
 “ and for British subjects of every denomination *.”

My secondary objects are, to lead my countrymen to mark some of the means by which freedom, and its delicious fruits, have been preserved to them ; and, to point out some of those through which they may be transmitted to posterity. In prosecuting these objects, proper opportunities will occur of indulging that dignified sort of pride, which every honest Briton must feel, when he tells, or hears it told—that he is a member of a community governed by laws acknowledged to be so wise, as to have often excited, in an extraordinary degree, the admiration and the envy of all the enlightened nations on the globe.

It cannot be deemed strange, that we should commend our Constitution, when we engage in ar-

* These were the words of Mr. Pitt, in defending the new Canadian code, against the attacks of Mr. Fox ; who, lest he should appear to entertain ideas different from those which characterize the *patriotic* levellers of modern times, took care, that, in praising the civil systems of other countries, not a single syllable should escape him in favour of that glorious one under which he lives.

gument with those who aim at vilifying it; for it is natural to defend that which an opponent attacks: but, we extol it when we converse with those who are eager to extol it; and, when we recount our blessings, we never fail of considering our civil system as the only solid basis of our island's prosperity and glory. It can be deemed no wise strange, that, in the social, festive hour, we should rejoice in the excellence of our Constitution; for, in such an hour, even trifles afford delight: but, we are known to have rejoiced in its excellence, after having retired into solitude, and given ourselves over to sadness; and when, like Englishmen, we have terrified ourselves with imagining that we beheld our country tottering on the very verge of ruin, we have sometimes been attracted, and fascinated, by the beauties of her form of government.

It must, however, be owned, that all our fellow subjects do not contemplate the English Constitution with the same complacency of mind. There are among us some persons, who seem to have resolved, that, at any rate, they shall speak and act as if they were dissatisfied. The language, respecting reformation and innovation, of those who have, at times, appeared to be nothing less than the advocates of despotism, these dissatisfied persons have often severely reprobated. Yet, after altering it

only by a slight inversion, they now deliberately adopt it. The monarchical sticklers used to call reformation, innovation; the democratical sticklers now term innovation, reformation: and in this, and this chiefly, it is, that the one class differs from the other. When the latter converse about that Constitution which has been the source of innumerable blessings; and which is well calculated to perpetuate all the blessings it has conferred; they gravely, and, as they think, sagely assert, that all is not sound at bottom. They pretend to have discovered in it, many fundamental defects. And they offer to support a mighty structure—not with strong, durable, though plain pillars, that had been transplanted, while in their natural and infant state, from the German forests, into our genial soil; and, that had, after acquiring sufficient bulk and strength, been gradually moulded by the most skilful of our ancestors: but, with flimsy, perishable ones, that had run up in the hot-bed of a neighbouring land; and that had, before they acquired sufficient bulk and strength, been reduced to form by artificers whose hands passion had rendered unsteady;—with pillars, in short, which seem to have little to recommend them to Englishmen, except the circumstance of their furnishing amusement to the fancy of romantick politicians, by displaying, on their capitals, the gaudy colours of the

the national cockade, and by exhibiting, on their bases, some highly finished emblems of what has been styled "the ass trampling upon the lion *."

What-

* I am about to do the French emissary *Paine* too much honour, by adverting, even in a *note*, to what he says relative to the English Constitution.—"Can Mr. Burke produce the English Constitution? If he cannot, we may fairly conclude, that though it has been so much talked about, no such thing as a constitution exists, or ever did exist, and consequently that the people have yet a constitution to form *." A man of a sound understanding would draw no such conclusion, from such premises. The English constitution may exist, and yet Mr. Burke be incapable of producing it. But Mr. Burke is capable of producing it: for I, who do not know more of it than he does, am very capable of doing so. What now ought to be our conclusion?—"Mr. Burke will not, I presume," continues the emissary, "deny the position I have already advanced; namely, that governments arise either *out* of the people, or *over* the people." This may very safely be presumed. The position is vaguely and vulgarly worded: but so far as it is intelligible, it is true.—"The English government," adds he, "is one of those which arose out of a conquest, and not out of society, and consequently it arose over the people; and though it has been much modified, from the opportunity of circumstances, since the time of William the Conqueror, the country has never yet regenerated itself, and is therefore WITHOUT A CONSTITUTION." Thus the emissary tries to render our government unpopular, by representing it as the fruit of a Frenchman's wisdom: thus, too, he

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kindly

* Rights of Man, by Thomas Paine, page 54.

Whatever the lovers of unnecessary change may say, or do, rational, considerate men, will not with-

kindly rids us of our happy civil constitution.—Taking him, and his arguments, as they are to be found, I shall throw together a few sentences, with a view to prove, That our government is not of French extraction; and, that the thing called the English Constitution, is not a non-entity.

But, before I do this, let me act justly by him, and also by some of the authors whose works he has read, in observing, that he is as frontless a plagiarist as ever existed. Scarcely is there one of the fundamental facts, contained in his effusion, his own; and yet he makes not a single acknowledgment of his obligations. He pilfers, as it is natural to suppose, chiefly from writers who, like himself, would be happy to behold the prevalence of irreligion and anarchy. He, therefore, stands deeply indebted to such characters as Priestley the Socinian, and the blasphemous Atheist who wrote the *Lessons to a Prince*. As a proof of this, take the following quotations from the *Lessons*; and compare them with the passages already quoted, or about to be quoted, from the emissary's pamphlet.—“There can” (*Lessons*, page 42) be but two species of government—by the “general will, or by the will of one or more persons controlling “the general will.” Mr. Paine's axiom about “Govern- “ments arising either out of the people, or over the people,” is obviously derived from the above words.—“The Norman “conquest (p. 43) completed its ruin:” *i. e.* the ruin of the Constitution. Mr. Paine adopts this idea with implicit faith: and he agrees, with the *Lesson* writer, that, since the Conquest, the English have not been so fortunate as to substitute any other system, in the room of that of which they were then deprived! —“ENGLAND (p. 45) HAS NO POLITICAL CONSTITU-
TION!”

withhold from the British Constitution, even if it never approach towards perfection more than it has

"TION!" This falsehood being a laughable one, I allow some credit both to the *Lesson* writer who invented it, and to the emissary who retails it. — "The constitution of the legislature" (p. 26) is a FRAUDULENT DECEPTION." Can he be a British subject, who dares to express himself thus? Or is it not more probable that, like Thomas Paine, he is some alien renegade? He calls himself "an old statesman." If, however, we except William Petty (the title of Marquis is "a nickname") whose house has long been an asylum for such renegades, there is not "an old statesman" in all his Majesty's dominions, capable of expressing such mischievous paradoxes as are some of those contained in the *Lessons*. The author of the *Lessons* seems to be, in reality, neither an old, nor a young statesman. His anxiety about what the news-paper critics have said of his performance, indicates that he is nothing but some ordinary person—who is not very magnanimous, and who has need of all the profits of his seditious labours.—In page 44 of his production, he lays a foundation for Mr. Paine's dull, treasonable strictures upon the Revolution of 1688.—"Every lawful government (p. 23) is necessarily a REPUBLICK." Mr. Paine repeats this nonsense; that, through the force of reiterated insinuation, the weak, and the wicked, may be induced to consider the English government as *unlawful*.—"I rejoiced in the hope (p. 120) that England, stimulated by generous emulation (of France) might be induced to revise its government, correct its errors, and remove its inconveniences." Mr. Paine does not fail of improving upon these hints. He points out the first step necessary to be taken towards revising the English government, &c. *An Assembly of Notables* is his object.

has already done, that large portion of reverence to which it is entitled. They will join with Sir William

The English Government arose, according to Mr. Paine, (whose plagiarisms I shall consider as if they were his own inventions) out of the Conquest made by William the First. But, according to persons whose intellects are fitted for sober inquiry, and rational induction; and whose candour has not been bought up with *assignats*; the English Government was constituted in some measure before, and in some measure since the Conquest. Its free spirit, and some of its wise maxims, had their being among the ancient Scythians*. Its spirit expanded, and its maxims multiplied, in their march westward through Germany. And they were introduced into Britain, not at all by William the Conqueror: not solely by Alfred the Great, or by any other, or all, of the twenty sovereigns, who had sitten upon the throne of England, for near two centuries and a half previously to the appearance of William; nor yet by the princes who governed throughout the three centuries and a half, during which the Saxon heptarchy subsisted: but, only in part by those sovereigns; in part by these princes; and in part by the Belgæ, who had gained a firm footing in our island long before the Christian era. The Anglo-Saxons, while the heptarchy endured, had a National Assembly, similar to that which the French now have, for the discussion of such matters as regarded the whole confederacy. Each of the kingdoms had its wittenagemot (or parliament) in which sat the principal persons, whether of the clergy, or of the laity; and in which only, could be made laws that respected the levying of troops, or of money. And the blessings of the trial by Jury, though not enjoyed fully till the glorious reign of Alfred, were generally participated by

* Vide Pinkerton's Dissertation on the Scythians or Goths.

William Blackstone in asserting, that “ of a Constitution so wisely contrived, so strongly raised,
“ and

the subjects of the heptarchy. Now, what does Mr. Paine think of such things as these—of laws, according to which—national affairs could be determined only by a National Assembly; according to which—troops could be levied, or taxes raised, only with the subject's consent; and according to which—a culprit could be tried and condemned no otherwise than agreeably to the decision of twelve of his peers? Do not such things intimate, even to him, the existence of a government—nay, and of a constitution too? But this is not all. The rights of the governour, and of the governed, were so thoroughly understood, and so fully admitted, before the Conquest, that it was usual to administer to Kings, when about to be crowned, an oath scarcely less comprehensive as to its objects, than that administered at the coronation of the sovereigns of these days. William, as well as his predecessors, took that oath. The substance of it (I use Rapin's words) was as follows: “ That the King would protect the church and its ministers; “ that he would govern the nation with equity; that he would “ enact just laws, and cause them to be strictly observed; “ and that he would forbid all rapines and unjust judgments.” —The truth is, that the forms of the Saxon government never were totally disused by the Normans; and, that its spirit always pervaded, in a greater, or a less degree, their civil system. *Magna Charta* itself, is little else than the restoration, or, as Mr. Paine would express it, the *regeneration*, of laws that obtained among the Anglo-Saxons.—Why is the emissary silent as to these important facts? Had he no head to comprehend them? Or had he a heart that would not suffer him to acknowledge them? — When he rages about “ The Rights of Man,” he complains, that the generalisity of inquirers have failed of tracing

“and so highly finished, it is hard to speak with
“that praise which is justly and severely its due.”

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tracing events to their source. Now, if we substitute the phrase of *The English Government*, for that of “The Rights of Man,” his own words will serve to refute every thing of moment that he has said about our government. “The error,” says he, “of those who reason by precedents drawn from antiquity, respecting the rights of man, is, that they do not go far enough into antiquity. They do not go the whole way. They stop in some of the intermediate stages of an hundred or a thousand years, and produce what was then done, as a rule for the present day. This is no authority at all. If we travel still farther into antiquity, we shall find a direct contrary opinion and practice prevailing; and if antiquity is to be authority, a thousand such authorities may be produced, successively contradicting each other: but if we proceed on, we shall at last come out right.”—Upon the whole, if the circumstance of the English Government’s having arisen *out of the Conquest*, be (as it really is) the only one stated by Mr. Paine as an evidence of that government’s having arisen *over the people*; it must be allowed, that he has not succeeded in proving it to have arisen *over the people*. It must, therefore, to use his mode of arguing, and of expressing himself, have arisen *out of the people*.

Englishmen, until these latter times, in which it hath seemed good unto Monsieur de la Fayette, to send over from France, Thomas Paine the American, for the praise-worthy purpose of enlightening their darkness, have laboured under a great, though rather a pleasing illusion: for, they really have imagined themselves to be the possessors of something that might justly enough be styled a Civil Constitution. This same apostle

Thomas,

The most learned, indeed, and authoritative of our countrymen, have generally been very forward in publishing

Thomas, "this arch pontiff of the rights of men," if I may venture to apply to him one of the appropriate titles of the late Richard Price, Doctor in Divinity, &c. this same apostle Thomas, I say, reasoning, it may safely be asserted, as no rational man ever reasoned, proves, most syllogistically, that we unfortunate Englishmen really have no such thing as a Constitution with which to console ourselves! "The country," he says, meaning Great Britain, "has never yet regenerated itself, and is therefore without a constitution." What means he by "the country?" Means he our island itself? Or its inhabitants? Or both of these? Some one of these three meanings, and no other, will the term "country" bear. But, if the island, i. e. the soil on which we tread, were by some chemical process, to regenerate itself—that would not give us a new constitution. Were the people, aided from above, to regenerate themselves—that would not create a new constitution. Or, were both the soil, and the people, through any means whatever, to be regenerated—even that would not give birth to a new constitution. Meant Mr. Paine to say, The constitution has never yet regenerated itself? As the thing is absurd, it is not improbable that he did. Perhaps he meant to say, The nation has never yet regenerated the constitution; and, therefore, it is without one. Now, does the nation, or does it not, possess a constitution? Mr. Paine says, nay he *proves*, as he thinks, that no such thing as an English constitution exists. But the nation cannot regenerate that which does not exist. It, therefore, cannot regenerate its constitution.—The terms of Mr. Paine's syllogism may, for any thing I know, be intelligible to himself; and, if they are, he ought to

publishing the praises of our free Constitution.
Nor have the historians, and statesmen, of other
enlightened

to be satisfied. As for the effect of his syllogism, its inconclusiveness will not surprise those who shall consider by whom it was constructed. I have no inclination to make it appear of less moment than it really is. Yet, I must say, that it certainly is very far from proving the non-entity of the English Constitution.

Whatever he may pretend, Mr. Paine must be convinced, that the people of England have a Constitution. He knows, and believes that they have one; and he would confess what he knows and believes, had he not foolishly resolved to argue, that no code is a Constitution which differs in its title, its materials, or the circumstances of its formation, from that which the French call a Constitution. But, to argue thus, is to act the part of a mere quibbler. There may be no civil code in this country, that will bear the description that may truly be given of the French code: and yet there may be in it one that very well deserves the appellation of a Constitution. If this be denied, then it may be contended, that as St. Peter's at Rome is a church; and as the description of St. Paul's at London, is different from that of St. Peter's; therefore, St. Paul's is not a church. But we know that St. Paul's is a church; yes, and a substantial, stately, venerable one too.—Britons are not quite so destitute of acuteness, as to suffer themselves to be tricked out of the comforts which spring from their habits of thinking with regard to their ancient, their glorious Constitution, by the clumsy definitions of a mercenary, peripatetick sophister.

We cannot, I confess, give so precise, and so certain an account, of the formation of our Constitution, as the French
can

enlightened nations, fallen much short of them.
The French, a people characterized by that passion
which

can give of the formation of theirs. Still we can give an account of it, that is satisfactory enough to reasonable men. Most of our political principles, most of the elements of our laws, were introduced before William the First invaded England: many were introduced after his demise, but before the time at which William the Third began to reign: and some have been introduced since that era. Although all our political principles, all the elements of our laws, never were written on one sheet of paper, and conveyed to an assembly, vested with exclusive powers of legislation, in some republican's waistcoat pocket, and, almost in one day, sanctioned by the authority of that assembly; although all of them are not now to be seen in any single chapter of our parliamentary records, under the title of "The Rights of Man;" yet, we are not ignorant of their origin, or of their history; we are at no loss where to find them; and whenever we find them, we recognise them as *the rights of Englishmen*, and, as such, we respect and admire them.—Had not Englishmen, actuated by a spirit that never yet could brook a tyrant's controul, been sedulously and successfully employed, for many centuries before America was discovered—and before the frivolous pursuits of the French ceased to excite the derision of surrounding nations—in ascertaining, for the common benefit of the human race, "The natural and imprescriptible Rights of Man;" nay, had not Englishmen, an hundred years ago, when civil liberty had no enemies to dread—but the despot, and the slaves of France, even collected the fruits of their beneficent labours, and digested them into a system known to their posterity by the title of *The Bill of Rights*; had they not done these things, Frenchmen

which aims at making the admiration of all the world centre in one's self, have often exhausted their

men would not now have had *their Bill of Rights* to exhibit as an evidence of their powers of imitation, and of the tardy progress of their wisdom, and love of freedom.

Mark the reasoning of Mr. Paine once more. "A Constitution," he says, "is a thing *antecedent* to a government, and "a government is only the creature of a Constitution *." I take him at his word. If Constitutions be necessarily antecedent to governments; and if governments be only the creatures of Constitutions; the English, having, for a great many centuries, as Mr. Paine acknowledges, had a government, must also, for a great many centuries, have had a Constitution. Yet he alleges that they have no Constitution!—Let me pause a little.—The Constitution of a country perhaps disappears, as soon as its government is framed. However, as Mr. Paine has not said that this is the case; and as I do not believe that it is the case; I shall positively affirm that it is not the case. Where then is that Constitution which Englishmen possessed, when William the Conqueror (whom, out of compliment to Mr. Paine, I shall for the present allow to have been the fabricator of our government) bestowed upon them the government which we now enjoy? I care not what sort of a constitution it was, which they at that time possessed—whether a good, or a bad one: all that I concern myself about is—its existence, or its non-existence. What is become of it?—I need push the matter no further. According to the foregoing position, that "a constitution is a thing antecedent "to a government," England has a Constitution. But then that

* Rights of Man, page 53.

their eloquence in celebrating the wisdom of our constitutional system : and they occasionally launch out

that position is a false one : and, as an object so real as the existence of the English Constitution, ought not to be made to rest on a foundation known to be false, I choose to avail myself of the position no otherwise than in shewing how easy it is to make Mr. Paine's own words condemn him.

A series of such observations as those that follow, would plainly point out the falsity of Mr. Paine's position, by evincing, that what he styles a Constitution, i. e. "the body of elements" which contains the principles on which the government shall "be established *," never has existed, prior to the formation of the government, in any country but France ; and that, even there, "the body of elements, &c." must have appeared to be a perfect constitution, that is, a sufficiently broad foundation for all subsequent legislative acts, only for a single day.—Will any intelligent person assert, that the French must not, by and by, enact laws, for the government of their republick, founded upon principles that are not expressed in their enumeration of the Rights of Man—alias—their Constitution ? Nay, that they have not already done so again and again ?——As to the Americans, they are known to have had a government (under which Mr. Paine acted) several years before they had what he calls a Constitution ; or even before they had assembled for the purpose of forming their Constitution.—With regard to ourselves, the principles of our constitution were conceived, and approved, only by degrees : and, as they were conceived and approved, new laws were framed. Our countrymen acted upon the last framed law, and upon those that preceded it, till all of them were found inadequate to the exigencies of the nation ; and, whenever this came to be the

safe,

* Rights of Man, p. 53.

out in its praise, at their public meetings, even at this day. No wonder. Greatly improved as they may

case, another principle, or another "right of man," was suggested, and another law reared upon it. Now, all of these principles put together, form (according to some of Mr. Paine's own ideas) our constitution. But, it was not till of late—perhaps not till the hour in which I write, that all of them could be put together: for every session of parliament, nay, almost every parliamentary transaction, adds to their number. The principle of each law, has, doubtless, preceded each law: yet it is obvious, from what has been advanced, that the principles of all our laws, have not preceded all our laws; and, if they have not, our Constitution (Mr. Paine's definitions of a Constitution, and of a Government, being received as just ones) cannot truly be said to have preceded our government. Allowing, however, that the principles of all our laws, have, at various periods, subsisted before all our laws; still it is notorious, that, at no period, before the laws of which they are the principles were passed, were the principles of all our laws embodied, and voted to be a Constitution. But, if not so embodied and so voted, they were not (according to Mr. Paine) a Constitution. Upon the whole I conclude, that in no sense whatever can our Constitution be said to have subsisted antecedently to our Government. At no time, after all, to which our records extend, have we been without a Constitution. For, a people who have any number of laws, founded upon principles that are rational, and ascertainable, may safely be said to possess a Constitution.—Our Constitution arose, like a tree that is strong and long lived, very slowly. The French Constitution has sprung up all of a sudden, like some rank, annual plant. Still the root of the latter may have descended deep enough into the earth. It may, like the root of Virgil's Esculus, have descended as far towards hell,

may believe their system to be, the more discerning of them must perceive, that it is far from being so well

hell, as its top has ascended towards heaven. This matter I shall not dispute with any body. All that I insinuate is, that our Constitution having taken up many hundreds, nay, some thousands of years, in growing, may be presumed to be fixed in a firmer soil, and, consequently to be better fitted for withstanding the fury of the winter's blast, than one which is the produce of a day.

Mr. Paine certainly is a most miserable reasoner; he, indeed, who pities him not on this account, can have no bowels for any sorry scribber. As to his doctrines, they, to be sure, are execrable enough. But, from his manner of exhibiting them, they become innoxious. He does not present his deleterious potion in a moderate dose, artfully disguised. He comes forward holding in his hand a cup filled to the brim, and having round its edge this label, The strongest of poisons, quite unadulterated.

Wishing to do justice to the cause which Mr. Paine has been permitted to espouse, I observe, that its merits ought not to be judged of, from the manner in which he has treated it. For, poor man, it is his wretched doom to be—not only the slave of uncontrollable passions; but (as I have been assured) subject to occasional deprivations of reason! I have already alluded to these melancholy facts, by way of accounting for his absurdities; and, though I now state them plainly, I do so—not without duly commiserating his unhappy case. Deplorable proofs of the operation of his malady, appear, in almost every page of his rhapsody. Nay, the very topics which he treats—point him out, not less than his manner of treating them, as one, alas! not always himself.——His effusion was to appear in England; yet, one of its prime objects seems to be, to condemn rigorously,

well adapted to the circumstances of France, as ours is to the circumstances of these kingdoms. As to the sages of antiquity—the Grecian law-givers, and

rigorously, whatever Englishmen esteem highly. The re-establishment of the Dutch Stadholdership; and the appropriation of a million of pounds every year to the diminution of the public debts he takes upon him to term “bubbles!” He contends, as we have already seen, that there is no such thing as an English Constitution! He asserts not merely that the English monarchy is very badly constructed; but that those who are about the persons of monarchs, know that there is no such thing as monarchy!! And, without being aware of the contempt which such allegations must bring upon him, he alleges, that mixed monarchies are necessarily imperfect and vicious; and that hereditary monarchies are abominable!! He stops not here. He presumes to consider the Princes of the House of Brunswick as tyrants!! He treats our Glorious Revolution as unimportant and delusive!!! And, by way of consummating his folly, and rendering himself, as he ought to be, supremely despicable in the eyes of every Briton, he recommends to us to regenerate our legislature, by forming “a general Convention” (an Assembly of Notables) for the purpose of inquiring into the state of parliamentary representation!!!!—Yet, incredible as it may appear to such as are still strangers to the fact, a number of four-tempered, disaffected persons—who meet occasionally to eat, and drink, and prate about politics, and who have (ironically it is imagined) called themselves *The Constitutional Society*—lately thought it proper to vote their *thanks* to this same man, for his treasonable rhapsody! Those who know them, and their principles, say, that nothing less was to be expected.

the

the Roman—none of their political institutions can successfully be compared with ours. There was a system, divine in its nature, the wisdom of which, the Athenians, in the insolence of philosophy, termed foolishness. But, could the Athenians now visit this island, they would be forced to acknowledge, that we might, with some propriety, say of the best of their institutions, what they so ignorantly, or presumptuously said of the only one that ever had any right to boast of perfection.

Whenever a legislator, moving in the line of political improvement, perceives the distracting licentiousness of pure democracy, to be just as far before him, as the benumbing repose of confirmed despotism is behind; he has reached the point at which it is his duty to stop, and build. Such a point our ancestors discovered a century ago; and on it has been reared, though almost entirely out of old materials, a stately, a magnificent fabrick. Of this fabrick we are the fortunate owners: and we ought to deem it one of the principal duties of our lives, to endeavour to adorn it, and add to its utility. If, however, it should be found impracticable, to render it either fairer, or better, we can, at least, take care that it fall not into decay: and, we can be thankful to providence, for permitting us to enjoy it in its present state. Nay, when I

reflect upon the excellence of our Constitution in Church and State, it seems to me, that it would well become us not only to acknowledge, in the most publick and solemn manner, our thankfulness to providence; but also, to commemorate generally, and joyfully, the virtues of those enlightened patriots, who were made the instruments of so signal a victory over the powers of despotism;—of a victory—which may be said to have been to Englishmen, as members of society, what christianity ought to be to all the nations of the earth as men—a deliverance from “darkness and the shadow of death.” Cicero addresses his fellow citizens in language, which I once thought every Briton, in contemplating what we emphatically and justly style The Glorious Revolution, would have adopted with alacrity: *Multi saepe honores diis immortalibus justi habiti sunt, ac debiti; sed profecto justiores nunquam; erepti enim estis ex crudelissimo ac miserrimo interitu, et erepti sine caede, sine sanguine, sine exercitu, sine dimicatione: togati, uno togato duce, et imperatore, vicistis.*

Having long entertained such sentiments as those which I have now expressed, it was not without concern that I beheld a member of the legislature, distinguished by his talents, his probity, and his attachment to genuine liberty, fail in a measure
well

well calculated to keep alive, and foster that spirit which ought to animate Englishmen. It was his wish, that his countrymen should devote one day in each year, to the commemoration of the virtues of their patriotic ancestors; and of the great goodness of Him "by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice." And to most of those who recollected the peculiarity of our fate as a people—who considered, that we had been suffered to enjoy freedom, and its consequent felicity, while other nations had been crushed by the merciless arm of absolute power, or convulsed through the intrigues of contending factions—his proposition seemed to be, in all respects, discreet and eligible.

There is, however, a description of our countrymen, who have talked of perpetuating the remembrance of the Glorious Revolution, by means not of "a temple not made with hands;" but, of a column to be raised in Runnymede. Their design would, doubtless, merit applause, were it known to have proceeded from pure motives. But, if it be known to have proceeded from motives, which cannot be named, except in whispers among friends; if it originated in a society brought together for the purpose of sustaining a desperate party, that had been hushed into insignificance by the sublime voice of the people; in a society that owes

its notoriety to nothing so much as to the unconstitutional efforts of some of its members, and to the marked, and bare-faced contempt of all of them, for the illustrious head of the Hanoverian family; if such be its descent, and such the place of its nativity, the contemplation of it can excite no emotion in the breast of a worthy patriot, but such as must remind him of the deceitfulness and turpitude of human nature. Yet, a column in Runnymede may appear to some persons, to possess the charm of novelty; as it may strike their minds, as being a monument erected by a set of men, who had laboured assiduously to deprive their country of the fruits of that happy event of which it is commemorative. To others, however, better versed in history, the enterprise will not seem to want a parallel. For they will recollect, that Alexander, while in the act of entraining slavery upon the free states of Greece, tried to turn the popular current in his favour, by enabling the Athenians to replace the statues of Harmodius and Aristogiton.—If the gentlemen of the clubs ever erect a column, the great body of the people cannot behold it; and, consequently, no impressions can be made upon their minds through means of it, but such as must be slight and evanescent. If they never erect
one,

one, and that they never will is, at present, somewhat probable, impressions both deep and permanent, but not very favourable to the cause of modern whiggism * will be made upon the minds of all the people, every time they consider what has passed among their deceivers. Less than a fourth part of the sum, which the members of the Whig Club have been known to subscribe towards bribing, and corrupting the people, at a single contested election, might long ago have set their pillar on its end.

What is it that proves the excellence of any constitution of government †? Is it the circumstance of those

* "Modern Whiggism"—which seems to agree, in no one respect, with that Whiggism to which we are indebted, in so great measure, for the blessings of the Revolution. A Whig of the last century, was a person firmly attached to the Constitution in Church and State. A Whig of the present day, is a person who does not scruple to undervalue, if not to undermine, the ecclesiastical establishment; and, who makes it his study to introduce such innovations into the civil system, as would change, almost entirely, its functions and its character. This may not, I believe it is not, the true description of all modern Whigs: but it certainly is that of two out of every three of them.

† I am not persuaded, that, in using the phrase "constitution of government;" I express myself incorrectly. The political metaphysicians of the age, represent constitutions

those who live under it enjoying an extraordinary degree of civil liberty? Or, is it that of their enjoying an extraordinary degree of political liberty? No, The Roman laws were, upon the whole, more favourable to civil liberty than are the English; yet the former bore not so many unquestionable marks of wisdom as the latter do. And, the institutions of Athens, while they conferred upon the bulk of her citizens, a greater portion of political liberty than has been granted to the generality of Britons, were very far from being so well adapted, as are those which subsist in Britain, to the important ends which legislators ought invariably to keep in view,—Is the excellence, then, of a constitution of government proved, by the circumstance of few, or no restraints, being imposed upon the subject? Certainly not.

and governments, as things so widely different, that they, no doubt, will deem the phrase very incorrect. But I care wondrous little about what they may do. When I speak of *a government being constituted* (or reduced to form, and duly balanced) something occurs to me which I think may properly enough be called *the constitution of a government*. Besides, it must be remembered, that although I have taken notice of certain definitions through which Constitutions are made to precede Governments, just as fathers do their children, yet I have not acknowledged the justness of them. I am no enemy to precision of any kind: although I do not commend those who always carry precision as far as they can.

A society

A society that lives unrestrained, lives in anarchy; and one that has submitted to but few obligatory laws, can have tasted scarce any rational freedom. Laws enacted for the purpose of preventing the commission of wrongs, are necessary to every people who have emerged from a state of rudeness. — What then must we assume, as the criterion of an excellent constitution of government? What—but the circumstances of its providing, that individuals may do every thing that promises to be beneficial to the community; but nothing that is likely to prove detrimental to it: and, of its contributing, as much as a human system can be expected to do, towards the advancement of these principal causes of national eminence—wealth, populousness, magnanimity. Need I ask whether, or not, the English constitution does these things?

The inhabitants of the United States of America were peculiarly fortunate with regard to the formation of their system of government. Most other nations had experienced a season of infancy; during which they were occupied in procuring sustenance, or in taking measures for their defence: and, before mental light could begin to shine bright upon them, many years of hardship, of turbulence, and of peril, had passed away. The Americans, on the other hand, had been conducted up to no immature age,

by an indulgent parent, whose bounty had sustained, and whose forces protected them. They had been instructed in all her wisdom ; and, when they began their career of independence, intellectual splendour had filled all Christendom. From the efforts of a people thus highly favoured by fortune, what had mankind to expect but the most eminent success ? Their conduct soon indicated, that they aimed at something perfect. Their Envoys, on visiting Europe, employed themselves less in promoting the honour of the United States, than in collecting such materials as might tend to enlarge, and to illuminate the minds of their legislators. These sat frequently, and long, in consultation. They corresponded with every foreigner, from whom they could hope to derive the least information. They ransacked the annals both of ancient, and of modern times. And, having done all these things, they threw into scales that had been adjusted beyond the Atlantic, democracies, aristocracies, mixed governments, and pure monarchies ; and weighed them, against each other, with all that scrupulous exactness, which became a people who seemed as if no institution could satisfy them, if not preferable to the wisest under the sun.—Now, in possession of all the knowledge of six years of this most enlightened age, acquired in the manner I have described,

scribed, and digested slowly, and thoroughly—what was the ultimate determination of the States? It was this—to lay aside, as much as possible, that fastidiousness, through which not only British things, but British names had been rejected; and to adopt a form of government, resembling that of the mother country in all its branches; but, equalling it—only in the popular one.

Senators are destined to perform, in America, what the Nobles perform here. But, the laws of the United States, having allowed to the senators—no hereditary distinctions; having stigmatized them with poverty, by assigning to each of them annually—a certain sum as hire for his attendance at Congress; having intimated a suspicion of their honour, by obliging them, when they sit as a court of judicature, to pronounce their verdict upon oath; having left them dependent upon the mass of the people for their suffrages, at the end of stated, short periods; the laws having, in a word, in no important particular, raised the senators above the level of ordinary citizens, seem to have qualified them very ill indeed, for discharging, with firmness and effect, the most momentous of all the functions of an aristocracy—that of inclining, as wisdom may dictate, the balance between the representative body and the chief magistrate.

Their

Their chief magistrate, the Americans have not dignified with the title of King. They have not adorned him with royal robes : they have not honoured him with the sceptre of majesty : they have not rendered him illustrious, by conferring upon him a crown : they have not entitled him to awful respect, by declaring his person sacred. They had been accustomed to live under the government of a limited monarch ; and they were well aware of the value of such a government. But, as one ancient nation, without altering materially the condition of their sovereign, had given to him the appellation of Archon ; and, as another, preserving almost entire the prerogatives of their kings, had chosen to style them Consuls : so the Americans, ambitious, perhaps, of emulating those celebrated republicans, chose to bestow upon their chief magistrate, the designation of President--thus securing such advantages as might result from the circumstance of so humble a title subsisting among them.

“ I contend,” says Mr. Adams, the late American Envoy Extraordinary, and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of London, “ I contend, that the
 “ English constitution is, in theory, the most stupendous fabric of human invention, both for the
 “ adjustment of the balance, and the prevention of
 “ its vibrations ; and that the Americans ought to
 “ be

" be applauded instead of censured for imitating it,
 " as far as they have. Not the formation of lan-
 " guages, not the whole art of navigation and
 " ship-building, does more honour to the human
 " understanding than this system of government *.
 " The Americans have not indeed imitated it, in
 " giving a negative upon their legislature, to the
 " executive power; in this respect their balances
 " are incomplete, very much I confess to my mor-
 " tification: in other respects, they have some of
 " them fallen short of perfection, by giving the
 " choice of some militia officers, &c. to the
 " people."—Alluding to a negative upon the
 decisions of the House of Representatives, and of the
 Senate, being withheld from the President; and to
 the appointment of certain military officers being
 granted to the people; the same author observes,

* Whether is the authority of Mr. Adams, who is a regu-
 larly bred lawyer; who possesses a sound understanding; and
 who, since the conclusion of the war, has enjoyed so much con-
 sideration among his countrymen, as to be deemed fit not only
 to represent them at the Court of London, but to act as the
 Vice-president of their Congress; whether is his authority, or
 that of Mr. Paine, who is an adventurer; a madman; a
 person so little valued by the Americans, that they do not
 think it safe to trust him with any publick employment what-
 ever; whether, I desire to know, is the authority of the former
 character, or that of the latter, the more weighty?

" These

“ These are small matters at present.” They may be so : although to me they seem to have such a tendency, that they must, not only at the present, but at all future times, be both very great, and very important matters. — He adds, “ The Americans “ have not made their first magistrates hereditary, “ nor their senators : here they differ from the “ English constitution, and with great propriety.” I have already hinted at the opinion which I entertain of one of these points of deviation from the received maxims of our government—of that, *viz.* which regards the Senators of America. As to her Governors, and the President of her Congress, not being hereditary—in these particulars, I frankly confess I can discern none of that *propriety* of which Mr. Adams speaks. But, I discern in them, or I am much mistaken, some things which the ablest politicians have considered as great constitutional vices. I discern in them the origin of eager and destructive competitions for power, among the more ambitious of the people ; and of servility and abasement, among both the senators and the chief magistrates. No alarming evil, however, of the kind alluded to, is likely to be felt, while the necessities of the people continue to be such, as to compel them to prefer the pursuit of the objects of industry, to that of the objects of ambition : or,

while

while the emoluments, the honours, and the authority of the chief magistrates are found to be so inconsiderable as to inspire hardly any degree of envy. But, when many of the citizens shall have amassed ample fortunes, and procured the means of indulging their propensity to a luxurious mode of life—violent struggles will take place among the candidates for the different governments; and, through such struggles, lasting and ruinous feuds will be generated. Let me add, when General Washington, who now prides himself upon being “a farmer,” and in preserving that constitution which he was instrumental in forming; when General Washington, who, happily for his fellow citizens, never possessed sufficient vigour of mind to enable him to become an usurper, shall have retired from the theatre of the world—another political actor may appear, with talents better fitted for daring enterprises; with fewer motives to stifle his ambition, but many more to inflame it. Whenever these things shall happen, America will experience the calamities uniformly incident to elective monarchies. And then it will be, that the English government will be copied in all its parts. “In
 “future ages, if the present States become great
 “nations, rich, powerful, and luxurious, as well
 “as numerous, their own feelings and good
 “sense

“sense will dictate to them what to do: they
 “may make transitions to a nearer resemblance
 “of the British constitution, by a fresh con-
 “vention, without the smallest interruption to
 “liberty *.” — *Transitions to a nearer resemblance.*

Why wish for any such transition? Why, but because it is obvious, that it would be an improvement.—Mr. Adams, in many parts of his performance, passes very high encomiums on the English constitution: and his countrymen, by copying it so closely as they have done, in their judicial code; and by approaching as nearly to it, in the organization of their legislature, as their prejudices and passions would permit; have pronounced its eulogy in a still higher, and more impressive strain.

—What farther proof needs be required, of its transcendent excellence?—If one be required, it may be found without looking across the ocean.

The French, in forming their constitution, possessed more, and greater advantages, than were possessed by the Americans when they moulded theirs. Yet, it cannot truly be said of the French, that they have been happier than their transatlantic friends, in the expedients which they have adopted. Prior to their revolution, it was their unhappy doom to be placed under a government
 that

* Adams's Defence of the Constitutions of America.

that was always arbitrary, and sometimes tyrannical. The Americans, prior to their revolution, lived under a government bound to adhere to laws, that were well defined, and uncommonly mild. The former, therefore, could not, without being pitiaibly infatuated, fail of introducing into their civil code many useful changes: the latter, had they been wise, would have introduced into theirs—no changes whatever, except such as might consist in a more thorough approximation of it, to the system established in England.—The American government is a monarchy in disguise: the French government is a democracy in disguise*. The Americans have a President, whose power, so far as it extends, is regal: the French have a King, to whom nothing but the semblance of regal power is entrusted. The Americans had the good sense to discover, that they were too luxurious, and too corrupt, to live under a government purely democratical†.

The

* Mr. Paine feels this truth so forcibly that, in page 132 of his pamphlet, he insinuates, so as to be clearly understood, that none but a republican government ought to be deemed a civil government. Now having, again and again, spoken of the new government of France as being a civil government, he must have been persuaded of its being a republican government—by which is commonly meant—a democracy.

† The following quotations will go some length in proving.

D

how

The French, in the midst of refined luxury, and inveterate corruption; with morals the most dege-

how much ground luxury, and corruption have gained in America.

“Mankind usually go from one extreme to another. The Americans have suffered unparalleled distress. They now plunge into (I am to be understood both locally and comparatively) unparalleled luxury.”—Champion’s Comparative Reflections, page 260.

“The political institutions of America considered as a system, display a parity and refinement which is without example in the annals of mankind; but Gentlemen, if it should be found from the experience we have already had, that notwithstanding, this theoretick wisdom, and these flattering prospects, we are dangerously declining, that crimes and misdemeanors are more prevalent than ever, that disorder and disobedience to law is gaining ground, and the terror of punishment, which formerly awed the most refractory into submission and caution, set at defiance by bad men;—to what shall we impute the fatal degeneracy?”—“Are these to be the fruits of the late glorious revolution?”—Judge Pendleton’s Charge, delivered at Charlestown, Dec. 11, 1786.

To the above we may add the solid maxim contained in General Washington’s publick letter, to Wm. Greene, Esq; Governor of Rhode-Island, dated June 18, 1783, which he would not have used, had he not thought it highly necessary to do so. “The path of our duty is plain before us; honesty will be found, on every experiment, to be the best and only true policy.” The General had principally in view, the chicane and frauds, of which his countrymen had been guilty, in order to evade the payment of their debts.

nerate,

nerate, and a religion that borders upon atheism; the French, in fine, notoriously destitute of virtue—long since proved to be the principle—the very soul of a popular government, have, nevertheless, had the folly to make choice of a system, that can truly be called by no name whatever but that of *democracy*! It is to this election of a system promising much of evil, in preference to one (our own) known, by experience, to yield nothing so abundantly as good, that we have to attribute the degradation of the ancient nobility*; and the fall of monarchical greatness.

* “It is properly,” says Mr. Paine, “from the elevated mind of France, that the folly of titles *have* fallen. It has out-grown the baby-cloaths of *Count* and *Duke*, and breeched itself in manhood. France has not levelled; it has exalted. It has put down the dwarf, to set up the man.” France has not levelled:—is not *putting down* levelling? But if it has levelled, it has levelled only “the dwarf;” and this too in order to set up “the man.” What man? The shoe-black with his detached frill; or, the friseur with his paper ruffles? No: persons of this stamp are in France now, precisely what they were before the Revolution. Mr. Paine explains himself elsewhere. He says, “Nobility is done away, and the *peer* is “exalted into MAN.” Now, in what does this same exaltation consist? In writing, as Mr. Paine has done, the word peer in italicks, and the word man in capitals? Not solely in this. It consists principally in stripping the nobility of all their ancient hereditary titles, and honours; and in divesting them of every circumstance through which they used to be distin-

guished from the canaille ! Thus it is that those “ dwarfs” the Duke de Rochefoucault, the Marquis de la Fayette, &c. have been *exalted*—that is, put upon a level with shoe-blacks, and barbers ! The chief persons in France, whatever Mr. Paine may presume to say, entertain ideas respecting nobility, very different from those which he has expressed. When they have defended their conduct in abolishing titles, they have done so, not by arguing that titles are things which, from their very nature, ought not to be permitted to exist : but by alleging, that in France, they were things that had been grossly abused. Indeed the remark, that “ none but “ those ignobly born, meanly educated, or inured to debasing “ pursuits, ever spoke disrespectfully of nobility,” is a very just one. Even the sable patron of every description of non-conforming levellers, would confess, were he, for once, to speak plainly and candidly, that if he must change his title, he would rather that it were to that of Duke, than to that of William Petty. We may, by and by, learn something either of the lineage, or of the training, or of the occupations of Mr. Thomas Paine. Let us, however, in the mean time suppose, that his notions of the matter are rational ; and let us apply them to the case of England. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and his Grace the Duke of Norfolk, on the one hand ; and Thomas Paine, and Jeffery Dunstan, on the other ; are the subjects on which we shall make our experiment. Now let our object be, to exalt either the two former, or the two latter. How is this to be achieved ? Not certainly by creating Thomas Paine, Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall and of Rothsay, Earl of Chester, and of Carrick, Electoral Prince of Brunswick-Lunenburgh, &c. &c. or Jeffery Dunstan, Duke of Norfolk, Earl of Surry, Hereditary Earl Marshal, &c. For, to do these things would be to level Thomas Paine, and
Jeffery

greatness*. It is to the same cause that we must ascribe the transfer of the rights of declaring war, and

Jeffery Dunstan; or, in other words, to convert them into "dwarfs." The thing must be done, by stripping the Prince of Wales, and the Duke of Norfolk of all their high titles, honours, and distinctions; and by denominating them merely by their christian and surnames!—that is, by transforming them into (what they are already) men. The Prince is, as a Prince ought to be, fond of every thing of an elevated nature. Yet, I doubt much whether he would believe me, were I to assure him, that, in order to make himself appear greatly elevated, he could do nothing so effectual as to try to get upon a footing of equality with Thomas Paine, and to remain *check by jole* with Thomas throughout life.——Such, it seems, is the new process for exalting peers! Through it, one is constituted, as if by a miracle, just what he was before! He is rendered great—not by conferring any thing upon him; but, most paradoxically, by taking almost every thing from him. Such a process may be deemed a rational one in France. But here, it is reckoned, and is likely always to be reckoned, rather a foolish one.

* Some small measure of attention is, perhaps, due to Mr. Paine's notions respecting monarchy. "If there existed," says he, "a man so transcendently wise above all others, that his wisdom was necessary to instruct a nation, some reason might be offered for monarchy; but when we cast our eyes about a country, and observe how every part understands its own affairs; and when we look around the world, and see that of all men in it, the race of kings are the most insignificant in capacity, our reason cannot fail to ask us—What are those men kept for?" The reason of Mr. Paine, poor, miserable

and of concluding treaties of peace, from the executive branch of government (the King of France
is

able man, may be expected to ask him any thing: and, when it happens to remain with him in such a degree as to enable him to comprehend what it has asked, he may be expected to give, without hesitation, an answer to any thing. "What are those men kept for?" It cannot be deemed the smallest impeachment of Mr. Paine's reason to have put such a question as this. And if it be considered, that the question is aimed chiefly at his Britannic Majesty, whose subject, nay, whose servant Mr. Paine once was: at his Britannic Majesty, against whom, however, Mr. Paine afterwards acted as a traitor; upon the actions of whose government he has, for several years, been a sort of spy; and of whom, as well as of his faithful servants, he is now a most impudent calumniator; if these things be considered, the question will excite no sort of wonder. It will then be admitted, that Mr. Paine acts entirely in character.—As no transaction in the life of a personage so greatly distinguished as Mr. Thomas Paine can be unimportant to mankind, I shall here enumerate his various official employments. He is reported (I know nothing of him but by report, and his pamphlets) to have figured in a great many honourable stations. He appeared, first, in that of an Exciseman; a circumstance that will redound to his glory. For, in consequence of it, future ages will have to observe, that, as Paul of a persecutor turned a preacher; so, Paine of an Exciseman became an advocate for the Rights of Man. After being an Exciseman, he went through, or is now in his progress through all the following gradations: those, namely, of a literary incendiary; of a rebel; of an American crimp; of an American secretary; of somewhat resembling
a French

is said to be vested with executory powers) to the

a French Spy; of a French and American crimp—in which office he now acts, and is greatly assisted by Dr. Priestley, who, I am told, procures for him not only the services of the artificers, but the discoveries of the artists of Birmingham; of a slanderer (some say a libeller) of governments; of a blasphemer; of a member of the Constitutional Society; and, of a companion to Horne Tooke, to Lord Lansdowne, and to the ———.

“ If there is any thing in monarchy which we people of America do not understand, I wish,” says the *quondam* Exciseman, “ Mr. Burke would be so kind as to inform us.—If I ask a man in America, if he wants a King, he retorts, and asks me if I take him for an idiot?”——“ It is easy to conceive, that a band of interested men, such as placemen, pensioners, Lords of the bed-chamber, Lords of the kitchen, Lords of the necessary-house, and the Lord knows what besides, can find as many reasons for monarchy as their salaries, paid at the expence of the country, amount to; but if I ask the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradesman, and down through all the occupations of life to the common labourer, what service monarchy is to him? he can give me no answer. If I ask him what monarchy is, he believes it is something like a sinecure.” Here the French emissary speaks either very ignorantly, or very falsely. For were he to ask a farmer, a manufacturer, a merchant, or a tradesman of this country—of what service monarchy is; his reply would be somewhat like the American’s retort: it would run thus, Are you a knave? or, do you take me for an idiot? And none but Thomas Paine, Lord George Gordon, or Dr. Priestley, would hint at any thing so ridiculous as monarchy being a sinecure.

legislative *. The salutary consequences that are known to result from the separate deliberations of three

* “ The French constitution says, that the right of war and peace is in the nation. Where else should it reside, but in those who are to pay the expence ? ”——“ When the question on the right of war and peace was agitating in the National Assembly, the people of England appeared to be much interested in the event, and highly to applaud the decision.” Here Mr. Paine writes like himself. He makes the people of England applaud the decision of the National Assembly, before it had come to one—that is, while the question was only “ agitating.” But, the truth is, that, when the National Assembly had come to a decision, the people of England did not applaud it: they condemned it. Their opinion was what it always had been, and still is, that the right of war and peace ought not to reside in those who pay the expence, provided that any person, or number of persons can be found, in whom it may reside with greater advantage. Now, the people of England believe their King to be such a person.——Being somewhat deliberative and sagacious, the people of England are farther of opinion, that the National Assembly, whenever it shall consult its own dignity, by ceasing to transact the publick business, as it now does, by coffee house clubs, will not find it easy to observe that secrecy which is absolutely necessary in treating with foreign powers about peace or war. It occurs to them, that as, in former ages, the passions of demagogues involved their country in distress, as frequently as did those of monarchs; so the time may arrive, when a party predominating in the National Assembly, shall cause as much blood to be shed, as could reasonably have been expected to be shed through the ambition of any monarch. It also occurs to them, that

three independent estates, the French have either ignorantly, or culpably, overlooked. They have, therefore, exposed their country to the fatal effects of precipitate decisions; and have rendered her constitution liable to perpetual danger, and to an

as the servants of the personage whom the French call their King, will, in process of time, and in spite of every precaution, become the leaders of the predominating party; so the crown of France will be found to have it in effect, just as much in its power to declare war, or to conclude peace, as the crown of England now has. The popular body in France, by having no right to contemplate but that supposed to belong to themselves, will always be in danger of becoming less vigilant than our Houses of Parliament are.——“In England,” Mr. Paine again observes, “the right of war and peace, is said to “reside in a *metaphor*, shown at the tower for six-pence or a “shilling a piece.” Mr. Paine is wrong. None but he ever said so silly a thing. He also observes, “The French constitution *have* taken away the power of declaring war from “kings and ministers.” This was practicable in France; and it has been practised. In England, according to Mr. Paine, it is not practicable: for there—the right of war, and of peace resides, not in the king and his ministers, but in the metaphor shown at the tower.——I wish some friend to *modest merit* would procure for Mr. Paine the office of shewing “the metaphor.” It would be a more honourable one than that which he at present holds; and the six-pences, and the shillings which it would bring him, would furnish him with what he now seems to want—an honest livelihood.——I should deem a long train of serious argument totally thrown away upon such a scribbler.

early subversion. Even so long ago as the reign of king Edward the Third, the English were too wise to assemble all the members of their legislature in one house. "If all of the three branches of power are not acknowledged, in any constitution of government, it will be found to be imperfect, unstable, and soon enslaved *."

After all, not only the Americans, but the French, are deeply indebted to our statesmen, for the share which they have had of the invaluable fruits of their good sense, and sagacity: and it is much more than probable, that experience will soon convince both nations, that, where they have widely differed from us, they have egregiously erred. Persons, indeed, who understand not what they say, may talk of "the new world regenerating the old." But, those who are possessed of competent information; who are capable of thinking justly; and of expressing, with accuracy, what they have thought;—they will represent the matter very differently. They may allow, that it is possible for the inhabitants of the Thirteen United States to contribute towards "regenerating" the nations of Europe: but, then, they will be careful to state from whence the former derived their powers of regeneration. They will state, that such powers could

* Adams on the American Constitution.

could not spring out of the earth with their rice, or their tobacco: that they did not issue from among the Spanish Christians of Mexico, or Peru; from among the Frenchmen of Acadia, or Canada; or from among those wretched tribes of Indians, against whom the arms of America are almost constantly turned; but, from among the freemen of this happy island—in which there has long been “that deposit of the rights of men, and
 “of citizens, of which Britons are still the guar-
 “dians*.”——Happy Britain! from thee, it seems, as from an oracle, the nations of the earth, nay, even those who had conspired thy ruin, receive their portion of that wisdom which imparts true felicity. No longer does the political, like the natural sun, rise in the east; and thence hold his course to only one, or two favoured regions in the west—as when he advanced from Egypt to Greece; and from Greece to imperial Rome. His progress now commences near the *ultima Thule*: and his rays enlighten the east, and the west, the north, and the south. Wherever he appears, liberty is in his train. Celestial liberty!—whose hallowed flame, cruelly stifled, for eighteen centuries, in almost every civilized country on the globe, hath yet arisen, during a very considerable part of that time,
 pure

* Necker on the Finances of France, vol. III.

pure and sublime in this supremely favoured island. So peculiarly blessed have Englishmen long been, that they may truly be said to have enjoyed a pre-eminence with regard to government, similar to that which a certain tribe of American Indians are recorded to possess in point of religion: "when the sacred fire of any neighbouring nation happens to be extinguished; that nation must repair to the *Maubilians* to kindle it afresh at theirs*."

In support, and in defence of a system, so judicious in its various provisions, as to remain unequalled after the law-givers of these highly improved times have used their best endeavours to produce one that might excel it; a system so beneficial in its effects, as to have long rendered Britons the most independent and happy people that ever figured in the world; in support, I say, and in defence of such a system, what ought worthy citizens—what ought they not—to do and to suffer? Let the character of an individual be aspersed, no matter how slightly, and he will wipe off the stain, or perish in the attempt. Let a potentate, lusting after dominion, bid defiance to a neighbouring prince, or attack some of his possessions—and you shall behold a whole people up in arms.

Thus,

* Charlevoix,

Thus, an individual will face death, for some trivial point of honour; and a nation will drench a field with blood, because a despot had frowned, or assailed some province, perhaps, not worth retaining. Now, if there be any reasonableness in these things, what stake can justly be deemed more than an equivalent, for that on which depend both character and dominion---nay, and every thing else dear to Englishmen?

With a British subject, the love of his country, and the love of the constitution of his country, should be passions of almost equal moment. For, of what value were his country, if robbed of her constitution? One Turkish province is as extensive, and owes as much to the bounty of nature, as our whole island: but, suffer us to reap the fruits of our incomparable laws---and one little English village shall display more energy of spirit, more of the true dignity of human nature, than the whole Ottoman empire.---Some nations possess territories, in the bowels of which are lodged silver and gold, or precious stones. Britons enjoy a richer inheritance than even these things constitute: they enjoy freedom---through which they have long felt that expansion, that bound of the heart, and that exalted triumph of soul, by which free-men are distinguished from all other mortals.

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It is delightful to mark the rapture with which the ancients discoursed of liberty. Many of them were its sincere friends. The whole tenour of their lives---their actions, not their professions solely---proved that they ardently loved such constitutions of government as imparted the sweets of liberty: and the manner in which they met death, tended, in many signal instances, to render the fact unquestionable. In this respect, Englishmen ought to strive to equal---nay to exceed the patriots of antiquity; since the constitution of England is more worthy of being loved, than that of any country that ever bore a name. It is true, that the lustre of freedom which now surrounds us, is less conspicuous than was that which surrounded the republicans of Athens, or of Rome. But, it is so---only because it is shed in an age in which there is hardly any darkness. Had it broke in upon mankind, through the dubious twilight that enveloped Charlemagne; or even in the brightest days which Pericles, or Scipio Africanus, ever beheld; it would have appeared not only unequalled, but unequalable.---Shall it ever be told, then, to the reproach of Great Britain, that she nourished sons who deemed ease, or prosperity, or life itself---nay, or all of these put together, of too much value to be sacrificed in order to preserve her glorious constitution?

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And who are they with whom we are likely to have to contend the most frequently, in supporting, or in defending, our constitution? Are they foreign, or are they domestick foes? They are, doubtless, the latter.—A foreign enemy can injure our constitution, hardly in any other way, than by coming, in martial array, to attack the whole nation. And, at what time soever he may think proper to do this, the interest of all will be concerned; and the friends of liberty, formidable as well from their number, as from their courage, will be found united, and fully prepared to repel force by force.—The assaults of an intestine enemy, on the other hand, by being better veiled, are more hazardous. When he resolves upon the overthrow of liberty, he steals upon the defenders of the commonwealth like a murderer in the night, allowing them very little, if any time to take their ground. He crushes, if he can, at one unexpected blow. But, if he see a probability of failing in this mode of attack, disunion becomes the first object of his enterprise; and disunion, debility, and ruin necessarily follow each other. The moment, however, in which you discover his designs, you generally defeat them. *Sine dubio perdidimus hominem, magnificeque vicimus, cum illum ex occultis insidiis, in apertum latrocinium conjecimus.*

A domestick,

A domestick enemy may be either *a subject*, or *the sovereign*.—A subject capable of treasonable practices, commonly holds a distinguished rank among the demagogues. You may know him now, as you might have known such a character two thousand years ago, by his occasional disrespect, or enmity towards the noble, and the royal: by his pretending to be excessively attached to the interests of the people; and, by his calling in the aid of such arts, as are the best calculated to move their wayward passions, and to engage their capricious affections. The pretexts used by such a man, in his publick conduct, are always specious. He enters upon no one measure, that has not the extension of freedom, or the greater security of some popular right, for one of its professed objects. There is a law which requires, that the hand of the reformer be put to it. But, whether its existence be essential to the constitution, or not, it matters not to the demagogue: his procedure betrays no hesitation. The publick welfare, he alleges, demands a speedy amendment. He, therefore, hastens to perform his task. But, so perverse and iniquitous is his system, that, by the very first alteration he makes, a stone is taken from the foundation of liberty.

It is when such hollow men, try to justify their mischievous projects by such hollow pretences, that

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we see the ambitious, or the disaffected, abetted in all their schemes. It is then, that the violation of publick charters, rarely attempted in this country since the reign of the last of the Charleses, agitates Parliament, and terrifies the nation. It is then, that the precepts of the pulpit, endeavouring to sanction private practice, teach the sober citizen to transfer his affections from his native country, to some foreign one; to love other countries as much, and to serve them more, than that to which he belongs;—as if no useful hint could be taken from the bard's moving expressions:

Oh, turn thy edged sword another way;
Strike those that hurt, but hurt not those that help!
One drop of blood, drawn from thy country's bosom,
Should grieve thee more than streams of foreign gore.

It is then too, that very eager, reiterated exertions are made, by the enemies of our religion, to throw down the most important of the outworks of the English monarchy.

When innovators aim at removing the pillars of the constitution, it is well if there be found among its friends, persons qualified to prevent its total subversion. To permit, at this juncture, any demagogue to gratify a passion for frivolous conceits, or dangerous novelties, would argue great folly in the legislature. There have, indeed, been times,

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in which there was much room for political reformation. Our forefathers saw such times: we have only heard of them. Reforms, however, in some departments of the state, and to a moderate extent, may be requisite even now: I am fully persuaded that they are. But, if any change, calculated to affect the constitution, be resolved upon, it must be introduced under an impression of the high importance of attending strictly to circumstances and seasons. The statesman who, at this day, would attain eminence through constitutional reforms, must rise on a very cautious trembling wing. It was, no doubt, in periods of national distraction and jeopardy, that our system of government received most of those improvements, which have rendered it at once so substantial, and so stately. Yet, it must be owned, that the vessel may be refitted more conveniently, and more thoroughly, during a calm, than in the midst of a tempest.

Of improvements in our civil system, made at such periods as those alluded to, that which was the consequence of the illness with which the King was, some years ago, afflicted, is far from being the least considerable: and to it I am tempted to recur for a few moments.

For this improvement, the British people are indebted to the decision of what they very well know

know by the title of *The Question of Right*. It was Mr. Fox who rendered the discussion of this question necessary : and in doing so, he served his country. But, if it was Mr. Fox who rendered the discussion of the question necessary, it was Mr. Pitt who called for it, and who was the principal cause of its being brought on. He, therefore, as well as Mr. Fox, may be allowed to claim some of the merit that arose from the discussion. It must, however, be observed, that the merit of the one statesman, is not, in all its attendant circumstances, similar to that of the other. Mr. Pitt did good intentionally ; and rejoiced (as he had reason to do) in having done so. Mr. Fox did good unintentionally, and lamented bitterly (as he had sufficient reason to do) that he should have been the instrument of it.

The decision of the *Question of Right* did not, as hath sometimes been supposed, add to the privileges of the people : for, to have done this, would have been to subtract from the prerogatives of the Crown ; and, of course, to act unconstitutionally. It only ascertained the privileges of the people more accurately than they had been ascertained before ; fortified them where an enemy was the most likely to enter ; and rescued them from the grasp of a band of politicians, who, that nothing might stand between them and the objects

of their ambition, ventured to throw away the mask in which they had long appeared before the publick. But, while it did these things, it necessarily pointed out, with more than usual clearness, some of the Prerogatives of the Crown. It, therefore, upon the whole, shed a new light upon that delicate, sacred line which separates prerogative from privilege; and conferred upon future heirs apparent, and future parliaments, a most important benefit.—If it did still more than these things, what it did must have consisted in its illustrating the characters of our most famous senators. It illustrated their characters, by shewing who they are, in whom, during the hour of trial, both the King, and the People, can safely confide; and who they are, in whom, during such an hour, no confidence can be reposed by either the King, or the People, unless at the hazard of being deceived, deserted, and undone. From the memorable period to which these strictures refer, it has been believed, that no indication of changes among the leaders of parties, is capable of influencing the minds of Mr. Pitt and his friends, so as to induce them to say, or to do, what they would not say, and do, in a season the most auspicious. It has also been believed, that popular privileges, considered a-part from self interest, share few, if any, of the affec-
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tions of Mr. Fox and his friends; and, that the people can rely upon being served by these men, only so long as Princes cannot, or will not, serve them.—Purity of principle, and rectitude of conduct were, on that occasion, as one could wish them ever to be—completely triumphant. And while the victory gained by the advocate for the people's rights, was too splendid not to inspire the friends of the nation with joy; the defeat suffered by the champion of the Coalition, was too mortifying not to fill the abettors of faction with regret. Scarcely had this champion finished his denial “of the right of the two Houses of Parliament to “supply any defect in the executive branch of “Government;” when he perceived, that his opponents had taken their ground so skilfully—that they were become not only invincible, but impregnable. Self-defence, therefore, or occasional, slight assaults, were the sole means through which he could preserve, from total ruin, his reputation as a leader: and to these only he had recourse. It is now almost universally acknowledged that, if, when forced to exert all his powers—by his adversary's having chosen to come down from his commanding situation—he did not perish in the conflict, he was at least reduced to the ignominy of returning home without his shield.

I have alleged, that those who are desirous of distinguishing themselves as reformers, ought to have a constant regard to "circumstances and seasons." I now allege, that an equal portion of their regard is due to *gentleness of procedure*. It imports them to know, that those meliorations of the English constitution which have proved the most beneficial, were the offspring—not of metaphysical theories, prematurely thrust upon the nation, by clubs of enthusiasts nowise averse to violent measures, and totally unacquainted with the conduct of affairs; but, on the contrary, of the plain good sense of a long succession of sober statesmen, who valued no virtue more than that of moderation, and no wisdom so much as that which bore the stamp of experience.

Our reformers sometimes talk "of restoring the original purity and perfection of the Constitution;"—as if some point of time had existed, at which the Constitution was produced by the unbroken efforts of one man, or of one description of men, with all its acknowledged excellencies around it. But, such a point never existed. The English Constitution, with regard to the manner in which it has acquired its parts, and its symmetry, may be compared to the Egyptian Delta—the bulk, and the shape of which have
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always depended upon the variable effects of successive inundations. Neither to any individual among our ancestors; nor to any one class of them; can we ascribe the honour of forming entirely the English Constitution. No Lycurgus, no Solon is known here; nor was any body of sages ever delegated by our countrymen, to digest, on twelve tables, laws collected in foreign lands; and not one month, or one year; but many ages, and many centuries, have been spent in rearing our celebrated structure.—The framers of our system have been successful, often through design—but oftener through accident—and sometimes even through events, which, when they took place, seemed to be misfortunes. It is creditable to them, that we are at no loss to name instances, in which they have been successful through design. Nor ought we to deem it reproachful to them, that they have, on some occasions, found success where they did not look for it; on others, where they imagined that nothing awaited them but mischief. For, in both of these respects, their fate is similar to that of persons in other departments of life, whose objects have been the prosperity, and the fame of empires. Christopher Columbus, in seeking for the East-Indies, discovered the West. And Alvarez Cabral was hurried into the possession of Brazil, by a tempest that had driven him

from his intended course, and long threatened him with instant destruction.

In the history of our laws, we behold a strange mixture of foresight, and of casualty. Yet, from this same mixture there has proceeded a system, which is, beyond all rational controversy, the best practical one that ever was enjoyed by man. Perfect, indeed, it is not; for where, under the sun, can you find perfection? But, its excellencies greatly outnumber its defects: and, as these have been accurately examined, they may, in good time, be remedied. The tree may be pruned: or, if it be found unsafe to do this, it may be ingrafted;—through which operation its appearance will be rendered more pleasing; and its fruit, perhaps, somewhat better flavoured. More nourishing, than it is at present, it can never be.—I am far from being ignorant of the language which visionaries hold respecting these matters, when they assemble in the taverns, or in their conventicles, to legislate for the empire. They will have it, that state physicians ought not, in these times, to content themselves with removing such disorders, as are really pernicious to the body politick. In their grave opinion, it is incumbent on the faculty of statesmen to endeavour to free the body politick—not only from disorders of that description, but likewise from
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all such as hypochondriacks, or lunaticks, may imagine to cling to it. And so anxious are they to set a good example to Parliament, that they will not wait till occasions present themselves: on the contrary, they travel, with a spirit admirably adventurous, very much out of their way in quest of them. — In perplexing themselves, and pestering the publick, about the means of getting their schemes executed, have they so much as once employed a serious thought upon the probable results of them? Do they know what have been the fruits of the generality of romantick schemes? Did they ever hear, that the crusaders brought from the holy land—not the cross of Christ, but the leprosy? Or, has it occurred to them, that the lues venerea is likely to be the most lasting memorial of the conquest of South America?

It has been stated, that they are domestick, and not foreign enemies, of whom the friends of the constitution have the most reason to be apprehensive. It has also been stated, that a domestick enemy may be either *a subject*, or *the sovereign*. Of the former some notice has been taken. I am here to express a few thoughts (perhaps rather incoherently, because hastily) respecting the latter.

The usurpation of a monarch, however artful he be, is more easily discerned, than the treasonable
procedure

procedure of a subject. For, through means of the elevated — and prominent rank in which the former stands, every eye is turned towards him. In consequence of this, it is very difficult for him to conceal his projects. It is very difficult for him to conceal them at any time ; but more especially at the present, in which sovereign princes are regarded with so much circumspection, and jealousy. — Besides, a monarch cannot take a single step, in any important enterprize, without the concurrence, and the aid of many of those who are about him. He, therefore, cannot pursue any measure hostile to the interests of the people, so long as they continue true to themselves. — To these considerations let me add, that, for many years, the slavish doctrine of non-resistance has been obsolete in this country : that the British nation, enlightened by reason, by philosophy, by experience ; and thoroughly acquainted with their rights both as men, and as citizens ; now, almost to a man, contend, that sovereigns are entitled to allegiance, only in proportion as they grant protection. In this state of things, it is not probable, that any attempt will be made to stretch unduly the royal prerogative ; and still less is it probable, that such an attempt, if made, will prove successful.

I sincerely hope, that resistance will always be made, where power has become rampant. But I
also

also hope, with great sincerity, that my fellow subjects will be careful not to draw down calamities upon their country, by setting themselves to resist when there is none desirous of injuring them. In most of the contests that have taken place between the English people, and their monarchs, guilt has been justly chargeable on both parties. The governed, as well as those governing, have often been much to blame. Nevertheless, I revere, and am always inclined to extol, that quick, that ever wakeful sense of right, which rouses the whole soul of my fellow citizens, when they but fancy that their privileges are in danger. I like exceedingly to hear the voice of the mixed multitude raised, in what cause soever they suppose to be that of freedom. I do not dislike to hear, occasionally, even the reasonless, and extravagant shoutings of the mere rabble. And, I am of opinion, that, should the people, at any time, cease to take delight in proclaiming their privileges before the world; and in exulting, and triumphing on account of their safety; there will be good reason to apprehend the approach of some great national crisis. The lion perisheth not more certainly through lack of food, than doth freedom among a nation—who take no pleasure in indulging emotions, and passions, similar to those which attended it in its infancy, and during its progress towards maturity.

maturity.—I am very far, indeed, from wishing ever to see that restive, stubborn, democratical spirit, which prevails throughout this island, subdued. Yet, I should be glad to see it deprived of such keenness, and vehemence, as may make it defeat the purposes for which it seems to have been bestowed upon us. In every extreme case, I trust that it will be found alive, and irresistible. Should any British monarch try to procure the passing of a law written with blood, may that spirit prompt the nation to snatch the sword. Should he load his subjects with oppression, or put forth his hand to “touch their bone and their flesh,” may it provoke them to “curse him to his face.” Should he prepare to seat himself on the lofty throne of despotism, may it incite thousands, and millions, to strive to pull him quickly down, and humble him in the dust.

The Church now claims attention.

If it be true, That the stability of our civil constitution will, at all times, be greater, or less, in proportion as the ecclesiastical constitution is better, or worse fortified, against the assaults of its enemies; it must be one of the principal duties not only of statesmen, but of citizens of every denomination, to strive to render the latter as strong, and as safe as possible. The following observations,

tions, thrown together with no great regard to method, will show to such as may think less favourably of the church than I do, that the monarchy is, in a very eminent degree, dependent upon the hierarchy for its stability. If they do this, they must serve to convince every man, who is so fortunate as to know---that the interests of our civil constitution are nearly, if not wholly, paramount to all the other temporal interests of British subjects, that it behooves him to oppose all such measures as may have the smallest tendency to loosen the foundation of the church establishment.

Religious institutions have generally, if not constantly, resembled the co-existing civil institutions of the countries in which they prevailed, both in their exterior, and in their interior frame: and, there has been perceived to subsist between religious, and civil institutions, an action which has, at all times, been mutual, and, for the most part, uniform. These facts may be illustrated, by referring to the history of nations, either antient or modern.

It is not necessary to dwell upon what is recorded of the religious, and the civil establishments of the Jews (in the formation of which the Omniscient Himself was concerned) it being universally known, that, among that people, religion and politics

liticks were not merely allied ; but, in every part, thoroughly blended and incorporated.

I shall say nothing of the religious systems of those fathers of science, and of elegance—the Egyptians, and the Greeks ; or, of the purposes to which they applied them ; being convinced, that wherever the dull, unfeeling advocates of metaphysical polity obtain a hearing, analogies drawn from the venerable rites of past ages can have but little weight. Yet, I must say, that, as both of those celebrated nations possessed great wisdom, none of their institutions can be supposed to have been entirely void of importance, with regard to either its structure, or its destination.

I shall not expatiate on the sacred institutions even of the Romans. I shall forbear to point out, how constantly the religious notions of that celebrated people mingled with their political deliberations ; and also, in what degree they contributed to the success of their enterprises. Nor is such forbearance likely to be regretted. For, who has not read, or heard, of the high reverence of the Romans for their Gods ; of their exalted sentiments respecting the sanctity of oaths ; and of the elation, or the dejection of mind, which the declaration of one officiating in holy things, could occasion in every rank of the most numerous of their armies ?

—The religious, and the civil institutions of the Romans, however, did not unite, and resemble each other, merely in their spirit: there was, also, a connection, and a resemblance between them, with regard to their outward form and economy. The gradations of their priests, corresponded to those of their magistrates. The former were as much respected, and honoured, as the latter; and, on most occasions, they were almost as fully occupied in ensuring the success of civil, and military affairs. But, if the priesthood were occasionally employed in managing the concerns of the state; so were the civil officers in executing the functions of the altar. When the Romans were republicans, their chief magistrate was the high priest. When they had Kings, Kings were the first ministers of their Divinities. And, when they lived under Emperors, Emperors were the sovereign pontiffs.

The sagacity of later times, while it has been improving the arts, by dividing, and subdividing, labour; has wisely separated the external duties of the priest, from those of the magistrate. It has not, however, aimed at interrupting the reciprocal operations of ecclesiastical, and civil establishments. In the history, therefore, of later times, there may be found circumstances, relative to the present topic, which deserve attention.

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The sovereigns of Russia, comparatively indigent, and uncommonly fond of unlimited authority, could not, in legislating for their dominions, be expected to suffer their clergy to retain the means of becoming very affluent and powerful. Still they were aware, that, in order that the morality of the people might be preserved; that the civil government might be duly obeyed; and that a becoming deference might be paid to the various degrees of the noble, and the royal; it was requisite that there should be—not merely an establishment; but one calculated to excite respect and veneration. They therefore instituted a national church — taking care that its external worship should be surrounded with much splendour: that those officiating in it should be variously endowed; and, that its dignitaries should rise above each other, in the order of Bishops, Archbishops, and Metropolitans; until, like the Barons, Counts, and Princes, they reached the personage on the throne—who is the head at once of the Church, and of the State. So much for the outward economy of the northern Greek Church,—Its inward economy is fully as well adapted, as its outward, to the advancement of what the Russian lawgivers have supposed to be the interests of the empire. The attitudes, and the gestures observed in it, are fitted

fitted to impress the mind with awe. Many of its principles tend to inspire fear. And few of its precepts fail of inculcating prompt submission to rulers, and perfect obedience to commanders.

The Turkish religious, and civil systems, are closely united. They are so closely united, that they never can be separated, without being destroyed. The Sultan never decides upon any important political measure, without having asked, and received, the opinion of the Mufti. As to the Vizier, whether he guide in the cabinet, or command in the field, he knows that he must not outrage that spirit which the Alcoran hath sent abroad. He knows, too, that his master can wear his imperial turban; and that he himself can retain his head; only while that implicit faith, and that animating enthusiasm, which result from the doctrines of the prophet, continue to be cherished.—In the civil department of the Ottoman Empire, there are no gradations of rank, or titles of honour, except those which are enjoyed, as official appurtenances, by the great ministers of state: and even these are far from being numerous. In like manner, there are, in that Empire, but very few ecclesiastical orders, and appellations. The title of Mufti is the only one that I recollect, which raises the person bearing it to

considerable eminence. These matters are external.—Look now at the inside of things. The moment you do so, you will perceive the Mahometan religion to be arrogant, and intolerant, beyond measure. But, you will also perceive, after due reflection, that it is on these very accounts, that it so well befits the government of a despot; and so readily assimilates with laws administered by one calling himself “The Shadow of God, and the Disposer of all earthly Crowns.”

With regard to the church government, and the religious principles, now prevailing in all the dominions of the Catholick King, it must be acknowledged, that they are highly consentaneous to the fabrick, and to the genius, of the civil system according to which those dominions are regulated.—The gradation of ranks, and of titles, among the clergy of Spain, corresponds, with wonderful exactness, to that of the ranks and titles possessed by the laity. Her ecclesiastical establishment, too, is not unlike her civil—either in the largeness of its revenues, or in the purposes to which they are applied. The church, as well as the government, is fond of splendour; and both are very splendid. You will find them to be so, whether you witness the ordinary rites at the altar; and then the usual ceremonies at court: whether

whether you join in the observance of an hallowed festival; and then in the celebration of a royal marriage: or, whether you partake of the triumphant ecstasies of a sacred jubilee; and then of the unbounded rejoicings of a long desired coronation.—As, by the ministers of religion, appeals are often made to the senses of men, but seldom to their understandings; so, by the ministers of state, the eye, and the ear are frequently gratified, while the judgment is commanded to stand aloof. At the head of their church the Spaniards have a pontiff deemed by them infallible: and, because this is the case, their rulers have attempted, on more occasions than one, to give currency, and credit to an opinion—of their king's being likewise exempt from fallibility. Yes—and many of the Spaniards have believed, while almost the whole of them have acted as if they believed, that, in the propagation of such an opinion, there can be no fraud—having abandoned inquiry, in political matters, to such a degree, as to admit, in all its parts, the slavish doctrine of passive obedience.—The schemes of their church have, for ages, tallied admirably with the arbitrary measures, and the ambitious views of their government. Allowing of persecution for the sake of opinion, their religion has never impeded the progress of conquest, by raising either the stern voice

of justice, or the mild accents of humanity.—
In a word, the external frame of the ecclesiastical establishment of the Spaniards, is very well suited to that of their civil establishment; and their religious principles—to the proportion of knowledge, and to the habits of thinking, and of acting, which their statesmen wish the great body of the people to possess. Aided by such a religion they may, for a considerable time, retain such a government: and such a government will always have an high interest in protecting such a religion.

The Romish religion is divided into Popery, and Catholicism. The former inclines eternally towards unlimited power: but, the latter is, by one large degree, more tolerant, and rational than the former. As to Protestant Episcopacy, it is, in all respects, more liberal, and more conformable to reason than Catholicism. Popery would admit of a despot ecclesiastical, as well as civil. Catholicism would recognise only the civil despot. While Protestant Episcopacy would promptly, and disdainfully, reject both. Protestant Episcopacy, however, would desire to have a monarch: but then, she would insist upon seeing his authority duly circumscribed by the laws.

Oliver Cromwell, well aware of all these things, resolved to exterminate even Protestant Episcopacy. He himself preferred no religion, merely as such, before any other. He professed Presby-

tery ; but he practised hypocrisy. Indeed, it was not necessary for him to attach himself entirely to any particular sect. It was enough for him to be a sectary ; and an enemy to the episcopal establishment. But, he was more than a sectary, and an enemy to the episcopal establishment. He was an advocate for “ those natural rights of man,” which the pitiful speculators of these times wish to substitute for *the rights of Englishmen*. He was a friend also, to that “ perfect equality of citizens,” which is to be produced, it seems, not by lifting the needy out of the dunghill, and setting him among princes ; but, by constraining princes to descend from their palaces, that they may live with beggars upon dunghills. In co-operation, therefore, with the supporters of his usurpation (all of whom were meek Dissenters) Oliver completely subverted both the hierarchy, and the monarchy ;—thus making room for forms of government in church, and in state, admirably accommodated to the temporal interests of himself and his friends ; and abundantly congenial to the spirit of their divers religions. — These dreadful effects would, at any preceding period, have followed from similar causes. Such effects would result from such causes at this day. Grant an ascendancy, all over the kingdom, to the power of any one of the sects, that have lately endeavoured to strike at the Constitution, through the

medium of the Corporation and Test Acts—and—farewell at once to Episcopacy, and Monarchy! “Privy conspiracy, sedition, and rebellion,” have always been, and always will be, the early, vigorous offspring of “false doctrine, heresy, and schism.”

Why should one take the trouble of enlarging upon this topick? Is not the influence of religion, upon government; and of ecclesiastical, upon civil establishments; well known to every statesman, and to every scholar? Have not the Dutch continued, for ages, to be republicans, chiefly because they have been Calvinists? And are not the Genevans greatly indebted, for their present constitution, to their calvinistical doctrines?

But, the Scotch are Calvinists; and they live, as we do, under a king. True: yet it is not owing to their religious tenets, that they swear allegiance to a monarch. They constitute a part of the British nation: and, as the same persons who legislate for Englishmen, legislate for them, they know that they can have no law, of which their more powerful neighbours disapprove. Besides, the chief of the nobility, and of the gentry of Scotland (as the Dissenters have justly observed) are either episcopalians by principle; or, occasional conformists to the episcopal church, in consequence of their residing
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so much in the southern part of the island, and of their being subject to the operation of the Test laws in whatever part of it they reside. Now, if to these considerations be added, that of the Scotch enjoying a religion which is established, and protected by law; that of their having, as a people, a great deal more to lose, and much less to gain by a revolution in the state, than the English sectaries have; and, also, that of those among them who lead in the walks either of literature, or of politicks, being far more peaceable, and loyal than our Prices, Priestleys, Paines, &c.; it will not be difficult to discover---why they continue to live, like the majority of ourselves, contentedly and happily under a monarchical form of government. — While the Union between England and Scotland remains in force; and while the Corporation and Test Acts are permitted to operate; the presbyterian principles diffused over the latter country, will not be found to have injured that constitution with which both countries are now blessed.

The case, then, of the Scotch furnishes no sound argument against the truth of that general assertion — of the resemblance, and affinity of religious to civil establishments---with which I set out. — Nor does the case of any other civilized nation afford an argument that militates against it in such a degree as to demand attention. France affords

none---France---the government of which has been changed, in a very short space of time, from a pure monarchy, to a democracy of the most licentious kind. The revolution which that country has experienced would have been a case in point---it would have been one very capable of exciting wonder---had those who brought it about, been papists, or catholicks, or even episcopalians. But they were none of these. They were not so much as calvinists: ---nay, they were not even christians. They were deists, and atheists, and universal scepticks. Their new constitution is such as it was reasonable to expect from such founders.

I recur, for a few moments, to the English history, which tells many an affecting tale with regard to the mutual influence of religion, and politicks. From it we learn, that, at what time soever popery has prevailed among us, tyranny has prevailed: and, that the growth, and the decay of the one; have always been proportionate to the growth, and the decay of the other. We also learn from it, that the phrensy of puritanism has ever been devoutly attended by the perturbation of democracy. And, that the beneficent, peaceful sway, of well digested, equal laws has been felt---only when a religion mild, benign, and dignified has been established. Can any one be at loss to name the
supreme

supreme rulers under whom tyranny, democracy, and the blessings of equal laws, have obtained in the most remarkable manner? Is it requisite to mention sanguinary Mary? Oliver Cromwell? Or George the Third? Let an intelligent stranger be informed of the state of religion under any of these three personages; and he will guess shrewdly at the principles of governing by which it was accompanied. Or, give him a true description of the government that prevailed under any of them; and he will tell you the character of the co-existing religion*.

We

* “ You cannot ” (says Dr. Priestley, in page 61 of a thing that pretends to be an answer to Mr. Burke’s *Reflections on the French Revolution*) “ be so little read in the history of England, as not to know that the *church* and *state* were as much “ connected before the Reformation as they have been since, and “ while the establishment was presbyterian, as well as now that “ it is episcopalian.” All this is well enough. There certainly was as great a connexion between popery and tyranny, before the Reformation; and between presbytery and democracy, during that later period which constituted “ the reign of the saints;” as there now is between episcopacy and limited monarchy: and it is very unlikely that Mr. Burke should be “ so little read in “ the history of England” as to be ignorant of such things. — “ You must know also ” (says the Doctor to his right honourable correspondent) “ that the inhabitants of this country were at one time as zealous papists as they now are protestants, and yet they were brought to make a change in their “ established

We have now had an imperfect view of the mode,
and of the measure, in which the co-existing reli-
gious,

“established religion, and that this was done without making
“any material change in the system of civil government.”
This, like every thing else said by Dr. Priestley relative to
establishments, is in part true, and in part false. It is true,
“that the inhabitants of this country were, at one time, as
“zealous papists, as they now are protestants:” but it is not
true, “that they (the inhabitants of this country, *i. e.* the great
body of the people) were brought to make a change in their
“established (popish) religion.” The change introduced into
the established religion, was begun without the knowledge of most
of the people; and contrary to the opinion of almost every one
of them who did know any thing of it. It was the will of the
King that first moved the things destined to be changed; and it
was the power of the King, without any regard having been
paid to the will of the people, that continued those things in
motion till the destined change was effected.—Neither is it
true, that a change took place in the established religion
“without making any material change in the system of civil
“government.” The change made in the latter, did not, in-
deed, become apparent the very day, or the very week, in
which a change took place in the former. For, the same inor-
dinate power which enabled Henry VIII. to throw down the
monasteries, and to alienate their revenues, also enabled him
to check that freedom of discussion, and that open avowal of
sentiment, for which the melioration of the ecclesiastical system
had given the publick a turn. Yet, from the very day in which
an alteration took place in the establishment, the civil system
partook of another spirit; and tyranny trembled. The salutary
consequences of the Reformation, upon both the laws, and the
administration

gious, and civil institutions of the same country, resemble each other—with regard both to their exterior,

administration of them, though interrupted for a while by Mary, were not long in manifesting themselves fully to all Europe.——“ You must know” (adds the Doctor) “ that the presbyterians in Scotland, and the episcopalians in England, have at this very time the same king and the same parliament. But how do these facts agree with your favourite idea of the inseparable union of church and state?” Perfectly well. It never has been alleged, that there is an union between the ecclesiastical establishment of Scotland, and the English monarchy; for there subsists none. But, it has always been alleged, that there is an union between the ecclesiastical establishment of England, and the English monarchy; for there subsists between them one both close and firm—so close, and so firm as to have been very justly termed “ inseparable.” From such arguments as may be adduced in favour of this union, the circumstance of the want of a similar union in Scotland can detract nothing. It can no more detract from them, than the circumstance of Bishop Horsey’s not being a convert to the antichristian doctrines of Socinus, can detract from any argument that may be used to prove, that Doctor Priesley is a convert to those doctrines.——The Doctor concludes thus: “ What, then, is the foundation of the dread you have entertained of any *future* change in the religion of our country, when no harm, but, as all protestants think, much advantage, has been derived from *past* changes in it?” The Doctor can hardly be “ so little read in the history of England,” as not to be able to answer his own question. If, however, he should be at a loss to guess at “ the foundation of the dread entertained of any *future* change in the religion of our country,”

exteriour, and their interiour structure; and, also, of the mutual action, and re-action, of such institutions upon one another. We have likewise seen in what manner particular systems of government, wait upon particular systems of religion.—It would be easy to shew the converse of this last case—that is, to make it appear, how apt particular systems of religion are, to follow particular systems of government. But, it occurs to me, that,

let him consult the multifarious, polemical productions of that man of titles, Joseph Priestley, LL. D. F. R. S. AC. IMP. R. PARIS. HOLM. TAURIN. ITAL. HARLEM. AUREL. MED. PARIS. CANTAB. AMERIC. ET PHILAD. SOC. &c. &c. &c.

—With regard to the allegation of “ all protestants thinking “ that much advantage has been derived from *past* changes in “ the religion of our country,” the Doctor can hardly hope that it will be universally received as a true one. There have, in truth, taken place, in the religion of our country, only two great changes; and those who are “ read in history ” will not hesitate to date the one some time during the reign of Henry the Eighth; and the other some time during the sanctified protectorate of Oliver Cromwell—of happy memory. Now, the protesting Catholicks (and those who protest are Protestants) are not likely to approve much of the one change: and, though Dr. Priestley may choose to assert (he cannot be so weak as to believe the fact) that much advantage has been derived from the other, the far greater number of Protestants will, in all probability, continue to be, as they now are, entirely persuaded, that it was altogether the reverse of what Englishmen ought to deem an advantage.

after

after what has been advanced, it is not necessary to enter far into the subject. I shall, therefore, rest satisfied with stating the matter generally, and in the words of the Baron de Montesquieu.

“ When a religion is introduced and fixed in a
 “ state, it is commonly such as is most suitable to
 “ the plan of government there established: for
 “ those who receive it, and those who are the cause
 “ of its being received, have scarcely any other
 “ idea of policy than that of the state in which they
 “ were born.

“ When the Christian religion, two centuries
 “ ago, became unhappily divided into Catholick
 “ and Protestant, the people of the north embraced
 “ the Protestant, and those of the south adhered
 “ still to the Catholick.

“ The reason is plain: the people of the north
 “ have, and will for ever have, a spirit of liberty
 “ and independence, which the people of the south
 “ have not; and therefore a religion which has no
 “ visible head, is more agreeable to the indepen-
 “ dency of the climate, than that which has one.

“ In the countries themselves where the Pro-
 “ testant religion became established, the revolu-
 “ tions were made pursuant to the several plans of
 “ political government. Luther having great
 “ princes on his side, would never have been able
 “ to

“to make them relish an ecclesiastick authority
 “that had no exterior pre-eminence; while
 “Calvin, having to do with people who lived
 “under republican governments, or with obscure
 “citizens, and monarchies, might very well avoid
 “establishing dignities and pre-eminence*.”——

Similar principles regulate, at this day, the conduct both of separate nations, and of different classes of men in the same nation. Protestant politicians, who wish to preserve degrees of rank, and of honorary distinction, cherish the Lutheran; but, not the Calvinistick spirit. While those who take upon them to rail against “principalities and powers,” cherish no spirit less prone to levelling than that of Calvinism.

I have still a few thoughts to express upon the subject before me. They do not relate to the mutual resemblance of ecclesiastical and political systems. They relate, however, to the connexion which subsists between systems of the one sort, and those of the other; and to the effects which systems of the one sort are wont to produce upon those of the other:——although, their most direct relation is, to the influence which religion is fitted to produce on the state of society; and to that which the functions of the civil magistrate have upon the cause of religion.

The

* Vide Spirit of Laws, Vol. II. page 143.

The religious, and the civil institutions of every infant nation, are allied more, or less, through means of the natural cast, and dictates of the human mind. Those, again, that prevail among nations who have made considerable advances in wisdom and refinement, are allied through that judicious policy of lawgivers, which, by an alliance, would confer strength and respectability on both the church, and the state. But where, or when, soever they prevail, they are allied—they are in a condition similar to that of persons united in holy wedlock, i. e. of persons whom God hath joined together, and whom it is impious to put asunder. In fact, the union between the religious, and the civil institutions of a country, is, for the most part, very obvious: and the laws by which such institutions act, and re-act, upon each other, have been so accurately observed, that, if a change should, at any time, take place in the one, it would be the easiest thing imaginable to tell what would become of the other. Thus, an Englishman might very safely pronounce with regard to the fall of the church, were certain revolutions to take place in the civil constitution of his country—were the principles of arbitrary government, for instance, or those of democracy, to be introduced into it. In like manner, he might, without the smallest chance
of

of erring, name the period of the subversion of the state, did he behold certain innovations about to be admitted into the ecclesiastical system—did he e. g. see either the presbyterians, or the independents, or the baptists (not to mention the papists, the catholicks, the arians, the socinians, the theists, the atheists, &c.) upon the eve of being recognised by the legislature, as the persons of whom the establishment ought wholly, or principally to consist.

It is very far, indeed, from being true, that it is a matter of small moment to the secular concerns of a people, what system of faith and worship be established among them. For, from the mutual dependence of religion, and government, upon each other, if either be vicious, or defective, both will be so: and, if both be so, what must be the fate of the community? Should I be asked, what system of faith and worship ought to be preferred in England—my answer would be, were I in the humour of speaking laconically, *Its present*. But, if disposed to express myself somewhat circumstantially, I should say, The religious system of faith and worship in England, ought, doubtless, to be that, which, while it is as consistent with the word of God as any other that can be framed, is calculated to contribute in a higher degree than any other, to the vigour and the permanency of the civil constitution.

If

If you discover a period in the history of any country, during which the people were moral, and punctual in their attendance upon divine worship; you have discovered a period during which they were also peaceable, and obedient to the laws. Fix upon another period, in which they were dissolute in their manners, and either bold enough to scoff at sacred things, or base enough to act as hypocrites; and you shall find, that, in that period, there subsisted, occasionally, general inquietude, and publick commotions. On the other hand, if either the laws have, at any particular juncture, been so defective as to impose but few restraints on the passions of men; or, the executors of them so wicked as to overlook crimes; at such a juncture, you may without hesitation assert, religion was derided, or neglected. The magistrate, in short, though conversant chiefly about temporals, must, at all times, use his endeavours to ensure the extended, and durable objects of the priest: and this he can do—only by striving to render the pursuits of bad men perilous, and disadvantageous; and those of good men safe, and productive of benefits. Whenever he shall forbear to use such endeavours, the preacher will preach in vain. And, if ever his office, and that of the minister of religion, come to be insulated agreeably to the metaphysical

theories of modern reformers, not merely will the preacher preach in vain—the arm of justice will be unnerved. The fear of God, therefore, and the honour of the King, must never be disunited.

Henceforth, let it not be contended, that either religious, and civil establishments; or religion, and government themselves; can long subsist, and prosper—apart, and without each being aided by the other. History declares, that such a phenomenon has not been known in any regular society that has yet figured in the world: and reason asserts, that no such solecism in affairs is likely to distinguish any nascent, or future association of men.

I am now to take such a view of the subject, that the various relations subsisting between ecclesiastical, and civil establishments; and between the practice of religion, and the administration of publick affairs; will but seldom occur: while the question—respecting the repeal of the Corporation, and Test Acts, will be brought into notice much oftener than it has hitherto been.

Our countrymen who profess the Romish faith, are far from being numerous. Independently of the smallness of their number, the present quiescence of their temper (which proceeds partly from that prudence which their subjection to the establishment recommends to them, partly from

fear---the reigning principle of the form of government to which they are partial, and partly from their approval of passive obedience---the leading tenet of their church) points them out as being less likely, than some other denominations of religionists, to conceive ambitious projects against the State. Their doctrines, however, are of a pernicious nature : and, if they shall ever be generally propagated, they will prove ruinous. On this account, it will always be wise, by Tests, or otherwise, to restrain the professors of the Romish faith ---the catholicks, as well as the papists---as far as humanity, and equity can justify restraint. Farther the nation will never seek to restrain them. Indeed, the recent proceedings of some of the branches of the legislature in favour of persons of the former description ; together with the reception which those proceedings have had from the publick ; indicate a very proper degree of charity, and enlargement of mind.

The Protestant Dissenters, who have, for some years, been endeavouring to obtain a repeal of the Corporation, and Test Acts, being a more restless, and, apparently, a more aspiring body of men, deserve a greater share of attention.

Were the Romanists to bestir themselves, in order to get rid of *every species of Test*, and, in the end,

to be successful; we might expect intolerance in religion, and despotism in government. Were the Dissenters to succeed, in their pursuit of the same object; and were their conduct to bear any near resemblance, to the conduct observed by Dissenters when they formerly were triumphant, an equal degree of religious intolerance might reasonably enough be expected: and, while it might, the nation would have no room for hoping to be rescued from despotism---from the despotism, not indeed of one man, but of many. We might lay our account to receive from the hands of the sects---not a well adjusted, popular form of government, in the very name of which there is something lovely; but, a wild, democratical one, with the notion of which men of extensive information are apt to associate ideas that are far from pleasurable.—In point neither of outward form, nor of discipline, nor of principles, is the religious system of any one of the sects, that have lately excited such ferments throughout the island, favourable to monarchy. While this is obviously the case, most of the leaders of those sects are well known to be hostile to kingly government. Some of them, no doubt, *profess* enough of loyalty to the Sovereign; and abundance of attachment to the constitution. But then, others of them pretend to no loyalty; and every one of them, in speaking of the constitution, is extremely

tremely careful not to pay too much respect to its monarchical branch. Besides, they belie all their professions of attachment to our monarchy, by abetting the cause of democracy, or of misrule, whenever an opportunity of doing so presents itself.

It is not uncommon to argue against the sects, by comparing their professions, and their conduct, at former periods; with their professions, and their conduct, at the present period. — It has been alleged, and with sufficient fairness, that, as, in former times, they preached up moderation, and yet subverted the government; so, in these times, their expressions of moderation ought to be received with considerable caution — and more especially, as the expressions used by them now, are far from bearing plainer marks of sincerity, than those used by them formerly. But, if the expressions adopted by them now, did bear plainer marks of sincerity than any adopted by them in former times; still it would be unsafe to trust to their sincerity. For, as the nervous, elegant writer of *The Review of the Case of the Protestant Dissenters* has shewn, the Non-conformists have degenerated, in a degree almost inconceivable, since the times in which the Stuarts reigned. — This fact is of high importance. It enables us to establish this position: If a race of

Non-conformists, actuated by a considerable share of love for their country ; and living when monarchical principles were in great estimation among mankind ; but democratical principles in very little ; yet thought it proper to change our government into a republick ; the greatest calamities ought reasonably to be apprehended, from a power of modelling government being committed to a race of Non-conformists—actuated by no more love for their country than they have for any other country ; living when the salutary maxims of limited monarchy are not generally valued ; and when the outrageous licence of democracy is extolled as the object that ought to fill the largest space in a patriot's breast.

When an experiment was made, some time in the last century, of the discretion of even those comparatively moderate Non-conformists, they shewed very little tenderness towards any thing however sacred, or however essential to the well being of the state. Their Sovereign, they put to death. The Lords both spiritual, and temporal, they degraded. As for the representatives of the people, they rendered them at once unprecedentedly corrupt, and supremely contemptible. They, in short, robbed the British nation of a system of civil government, of which they were justly proud ; a
system

system that had been the work of many ages; and which the lapse of one, or two ages more, would, without either rebellion, or bloodshed, have accommodated to all the important purposes of society.

—What did they next? They talked of compensating the nation for the mischiefs they had done. They gave them a “rump” for a Parliament; a ruffian for a King; and a constitution of which they themselves soon became so heartily ashamed, that they defaced it, and pulled it down with their own hands.

Would the Dissenters now go to such extreme lengths, were the management of affairs committed to them? It is unnecessary to give a direct answer to this question; as the virtue of the Dissenters will not be tried. Yet, this much I must state, that, a brutal joy, not unlike that discovered by the executioners of King Charles the First when they beheld his blood, was, on a late memorable occasion, manifested by many of the sectaries; and, that an hatred of all ancient establishments, very similar to that which distinguished the sectaries of the last century, distinguishes those of the present.

What man capable of feeling as a man ought to do—what man not driven to madness through puritanical enthusiasm; or confirmed in stoicism

through the dulness of metaphysical studies; has marked the insolent exultation of Dr. Price, in mentioning what he represents as *the leading in triumph* of the King of France; or, that of a relation of his on seeing the same amiable personage "dragged," as he (the metaphysician) expresses himself, "in submissive triumph by his conquering subjects;" without being filled with indignation, or with horror!

With regard to our ecclesiastical establishment—neither that vain calculator, Price; nor any other of the leading sectaries, who have laboured to bring both religion and government into jeopardy; has, for several years, made any secret of the designs formed against it. Let us listen to some of them while they tell their own story,

The enemies of "Reformation;" says Dr. Price, "do not sufficiently consider, that, by opposing, in enlightened times, all attempts to remove such shocking blemishes from our established code of faith and worship, they expose the hierarchy to particular danger of a sudden and total overthrow. As a friend to the free progress of truth, and an enemy to all slavish hierarchies, I could almost wish they may persevere in their obstinacy*." In another place he adds,
 "The

“ The period to which I have been carrying your views
 “ must be preceded by the downfall of all slavish and
 “ antichristian hierarchies.----The liberality of the
 “ times has already loosened their foundation; the
 “ obstinacy of their adherents is encreasing their dan-
 “ ger; and the wise and virtuous of all descriptions
 “ should make themselves willing instruments, in
 “ the hands of Providence, to hasten their re-
 “ moval*.” I next transcribe the words of his
 industrious coadjutor Dr. Priestley. “ We are as
 “ it were laying gunpowder under the old building
 “ of error and superstition, which a single spark
 “ may hereafter inflame, so as to produce an in-
 “ stantaneous explosion; in consequence of which
 “ that edifice, the creation of which has been the
 “ work of ages, may be overturned in a moment,
 “ and so effectually, as that the same foundation
 “ can never be built upon again †.” In conse-
 quence of these glowing expressions Priestley’s pro-
 ject has been termed, and not unaptly, *the gun-
 powder plot*. This electrical Divine merits a fuller
 hearing. “ What we are aiming at is, to shew the
 “ people that in the Church establishment of this
 “ country, there is much of error and superstition:
 “ and if we can convince them that it is so (and
 “ of

* Dr. Price’s Sermons.

† The Importance and Extent of Free Inquiry.

“ of this I have no doubt) in proper time they will
 “ take it down themselves †.” He further adds,
 “ Things are already in such a train, that though
 “ no person can foresee the particular time and
 “ manner of the change in favour of *Unitarianism*,
 “ we may be as certain of its taking place, as if
 “ we saw it actually accomplished *.” In the first
 of these passages, the prophet declines, for himself
 and his fellow leaders, the pleasing, pious task of
 taking down the church. He seems to think, that
 all will be very well, if the people, or the *mob*, can
 any how be persuaded, “ to take it down them-
 “ selves.” In the other passage, he does not so
 much as hint at the persons by whom the impor-
 tant work is to be performed : but, although this
 is the case, he cannot be supposed to entertain any
 doubt of seeing it, at some auspicious era, *i. e.* in
 the midst of some awful conflagration, or during
 some unusually alarming publick commotion, very
 well performed by some set of beings or another.
 He follows up his insinuation respecting the im-
 probable event of the subversion of the church,
 with an explicit declaration concerning one still
 more improbable---that namely, of “ a change in
 favour of *Unitarianism* !”——The overthrow of
 the French monarchy, has afforded, to all the le-
 vellers

† Letter to Mr. Pitt.

* The Importance and Extent of Free Inquiry.

vellers of the age, grounds for additional hope and joy. Dr. Price in his sermon preached at the Old Jewry on the 4th of November 1789, speaks of its overthrow as having given rise to "a confidence" with which his mind was impressed more "than he could express. He meant the confidence of the favourableness of the present times to all exertions in the cause of liberty." And Dr. Priestley, in his Letters to Mr. Burke, says, "The spirit of free and rational enquiry is now abroad, and without any aid from the powers of this world, will not fail to overturn all error and false religion, wherever it is found, and neither the church of Rome, nor the church of England, will be able to stand before it." Has the conduct of the British nation, or have the decisions of the British legislature, since the French monarchy was overturned, afforded any sort of countenance either to the grave "consideration" of Dr. Price, or to the sapient prediction of Dr. Priestley? Just before the French Revolution took place, the English nation seemed to feel very easy, even while the Dissenters were trying to move Heaven and Earth in order to get the Tests abolished: and the House of Commons, about that time, acted with a degree of indifference, as to the concerns of the church, through which the Dissenters were led to form un-
 commonly

commonly high expectations. But, how have the people, and how have their representatives, demeaned themselves since the French Revolution took place? The former have started from the lethargy into which they had suffered themselves to sink; and the latter instead of rejecting, as they did in two different sessions previously to the French Revolution, a motion for repealing the Corporation and Test Acts by a majority of about *twenty votes*---have signified their disapprobation of a motion to the same effect---by a majority of near *ten times twenty votes*.—

Predictions of the fall of the church are no novelty among the Dissenters. Mr. Pierce of Exeter, many years ago, saw the establishment tottering to its fall. “We rejoice,” said he, “to see the foundations shaken, and the fabrick sinking, as we never doubted but it would some time or other.” *Some time or other*. These seers, with great prudence, speak indefinitely. It is not to three days, a period once safely assumed by a prophet at Jerusalem; nor is it to three years—or even to three centuries, that they limit the fulfilment of their predictions.

The passages now cited do not merely make it evident, that the Dissenters are enemies to the Church of England: they give us reason to suppose,

pose, that they have no sort of predilection for any religious system that has yet been received as a national establishment. Nevertheless, the Dissenters can hardly be said to be averse from the establishment of every religious system. "I am greatly mistaken," says Dr. Price, "if the obstinacy with which abuses, so gross as to be palpable to all the world, are retained in the present age, and even in this country, will not, in the end, prove a great publick benefit, by causing a more quick and complete overthrow of them and the establishments that support them, and thus giving a better opportunity for the introduction of establishments more favourable to truth, and liberty, and virtue*." Now, what sort of establishments may those be to which the Doctor alludes? Dr. Priestley, and he have said enough to enable us to answer the question—the former praising UNITARIANISM, and, with the single drawback of a parenthesis, generously tendering it to his countrymen; the latter *almost* recommending ATHEISM! "If you must have a state religion (for which I own, I see no occasion whatever) let it be at least something rational and intelligible; something that mankind may see to afford a natural foundation of good

* Price's Sermons.

“good conduct here, and of reasonable expectation hereafter : and such is the *Unitarian doctrine**.” “So injurious are civil establishments of formularies of faith and worship, that it has long been a subject of dispute which is worst in its effects on society, such a religion, or speculative *Atheism*. For my part, I could almost give the preference to the latter †.”

These distinguished removers of civil and ecclesiastical *abuses* ; these zealous friends of *true* religion, have long been acknowledged to possess qualities that are essential to the characters of successful innovators—such as industry, perseverance, and confidence. They, and the combinations which they have helped to form, have, for several years, interrupted the tranquillity of the nation—by means of seditious harangues, resolutions, sermons, and pamphlets. And, having resolved to exert every faculty, as well of their bodies, as of their minds, with a view to prevent the publick tranquillity from being completely restored, they seem to flatter themselves, that, one day, or another, they shall be able to bring their labours to a happy termination. The established Church they,

* Priestley's Letter to Mr. Pitt.

† Price's Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution.

they, probably, do not expect ever to be able to endanger, by getting the Tests abolished. But, they appear to be convinced, that it may be shaken by other means—by the dissemination, for instance, of certain novel opinions respecting religion, and government. They, therefore, direct much of their attention to their new Seminaries; but especially to that at Hackney.

The first idea of cherishing this institution (which, it must be owned, evinces a well concerted profound scheme) was taken from the shock which the Tests, used in the two Universities, gave to the tender consciences of young sectaries. One of the principal objects of the institution seems to be, “to put the heads of the Universities to shame”—by exhibiting to them an example of *superiour liberality of mind*; in as much as it is a maxim among its pious conductors (all of whom are, as I have been told, Dissenting Preachers) to receive a young man of the episcopal persuasion, who would have met with no obstacle at Oxford, or at Cambridge, with rather more alacrity and kindness, than one, who, being a non-conformist, could not have been admitted into either of those ancient and renowned seats of learning, without being embarrassed by the application of the usual tests. To certain persons this may appear somewhat great and noble: to me it appears somewhat little,

little, and, beyond all example, artful.—The other principal objects of the Seminary at Hackney are, to propagate, through the medium of the youth who are educated at it, the *enlarged* notions of religion entertained by most of the sectaries ; but, particularly, by the focinians--- who greatly disdain almost every species of restraint imposed either by human, or by divine authority : and, to make a general spread of the political principles now in vogue among the non-conformists ; which principles, should they ever come to predominate in these kingdoms, will infallibly overturn the British throne.—These peace-inspiring appellations *Richard Price*, D. D. F. R. S. &c. &c. lately headed the list of the names of those teaching at this modern Racow. Dr. Price is gone. But, his mantle is here : and, when thrown over the no less officacious one of Dr. Priestley, the Doctor may be deemed a proper person to act as his friend's successor. He preached for the new Seminary, a few days ago, at the Old-Jewry Conventicle. And, in a few days more, we may see him, with both his cloaks around him, repairing to parliament, to beseech the lords temporal, and spiritual, to erect it into a University.

Would it be wise to throw open to persons so principled, and so employed, the door that leads to the highest dignities, and the greatest authority

in the State? But, supposing that, by the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, this is actually done, would not episcopacy, in such a case, and of course, monarchy, be exposed to much danger? Would not those who wish well to the Constitution in Church and State, have good reason for being apprehensive about that vast increase of the diffusion of pernicious doctrines, religious and political, which the patronage and the respectability that result from the possession of lucrative and honourable offices, co-operating with an ardent proselyting zeal, might soon occasion? —

It would be unpardonable affectation in any well informed man to allege, that he feels uneasiness from a conviction, that affairs are now in such a train, that the influence of the English Dissenters must, by and by, become paramount to that of all those persons who are attached to the English church: for, no such conviction can be founded either in reason; or in the circumstances of the times. Let it, however, be granted (an hypothesis can do no harm) that the influence of the Dissenters has recently encreased so as just to exceed that of the episcopalians. Now, there is nothing unreasonable in imagining, that, in such a posture of things, those composing the paramount power would desire to have their turn of enjoying the emoluments, and the privileges, hitherto enjoyed

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by the friends of the establishment. Nor is there any thing unreasonable in imagining, that the friends of the establishment, however plainly their conduct may, for many ages, have been marked with christian meekness and forbearance, would not resign, without a struggle, the means of their pre-eminence. And, if so---with what jealousies; what heart-burnings, what rancorous contests; with what a waste of talents, of wealth, and of blood; in a word, with what a wreck of every thing both human, and divine, would mankind be shocked! Such ills as these surely ought not to be invited. It will ever be worthy the wisdom of the legislature to prevent them, by impeding the progress of men---in whose sight no publick calamity is of any moment, when weighed against their peculiar theories: and it can, at no time, be unbecoming in the friends of the church, but more especially in the clergy, to proceed lawfully, and moderately, in frustrating the designs of persons who seem to have nothing so much at heart as the total ruin of the national religion. If ever the combined sects shall again try to move the representatives of the people, from the constitutional ground which they have taken, by pressing upon them with their whole strength; it will be the duty of all churchmen forthwith to range themselves on the opposite side.

A Test

A Test there must always be. If a day should come, in which there shall be nothing whereby to ascertain either the friendly, or the pacifick intentions of the Dissenters towards the establishment; on that day will be sown the seeds of national evils of the most portentous nature. Holy wars will ensue! But, granting that these may be obviated—what can their absence avail the Church? By gentler means than the use of the bayonet, or of artillery, her ruin may be accomplished. The subversion of the Roman empire was owing, in a principal measure; to the apparently harmless circumstance, of the freedom of the metropolis being conferred upon a number of conquered subjects; to all persons of which description it had been peremptorily refused for ages.

The tranquillity of the nation, it seems, would not be promoted by the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts.—Nor would the repeal of them conduce to the true interests of religion.

From the inveterate dislike of the Dissenters, to all the parts, of all known establishments, it is hard to conceive what criterion they would assign to the world, by which to judge either of men's religious principles; or, of the propriety of their mode of worship, whether publick or private. They have afforded reasons for suspecting, that they would assign none.—In times so very free

from superstition ; so entirely devoid of bigotry ; and so thoroughly enlightened by the rays of *metaphysical divinity* ; all the venerable symbols of christianity would be laid aside : no man would be retarded in his vicious pursuits, by being interrogated about the nature of his faith : the eye of the philosopher would never be offended, by beholding acts so truly superfluous as those of devotion ; or, that of the puritan, by witnessing any thing so unchristian as a regular administration of sacred rites : there would, at length, be no temples throughout the land, but those which infidels have long recommended — *mens own breasts*. The religion of mortals, would be that of pure intelligences. There would be “ no king in “ Israel ; ” and, therefore, every profligate would do whatever might seem best in his own sight. During such a splendid period---a period distinguished by so glorious a latitude of opinion ; by so complete a separation of religion, from every thing belonging to the visible world ; an Englishman would scorn to be called a Lutheran ; and a Scotchman would spurn at the appellation of Calvinist. One man would say, I am not of Paul ; another, I am not of Apollos ; and a third, I am not of Cephas. This divine would acquire renown, by despising his Saviour ; that, by annihilating the Holy Ghost ; and a third, more sublime

time in his speculations, and more fortunate in his discoveries than all other created beings, might succeed in proving the non-existence of the Deity Himself! He would search into the nature of God, precisely as Dr. Priestley and some other theological chemists, have enquired into the nature of phlogiston: and he would express the result of his researches, pretty much as they have expressed the result of theirs, by saying, "he really suspected that no such thing existed."—— Thus would the prevalence of the power of the sects benefit religion*.

As

* Some of the enterprises which I have mentioned, as being likely to add lustre to "the reign of the saints," were undertaken many years ago. It is long since Dr. Priestley smiled at the idea of the existence of the Holy Ghost; and longer still since he proved, to the satisfaction of all such as were willing to take his *ipse dixit* as a sufficient evidence of any thing, that our Saviour is nothing but a mere Jew. As to the Almighty, having dishonoured Him, by dishonouring his Son; and having grossly misrepresented the terms of that religion through which it was intended that He should be glorified, and his creatures saved; it is reasonable to suppose, that the Doctor, and his followers will soon feel themselves bold enough to scoff at the divine attributes.——Dr. Priestley's religious principles may easily be known. It is difficult, however, to guess at his motives for cultivating, and disseminating them so industriously as he does. I begin to be persuaded, that the report of his being desirous of appearing in history as another

great

As to the effects of the prevalence of their power, on the virtue and the happiness of the community, we may judge of them by calling to mind what the British nation experienced, during that portion of the last century which has emphatically been styled THE REIGN of the SAINTS. Mr. Edwards, a presbyterian minister, describes the condition of that period in the following words. " We instead of a reformation, are grown from
 " one extreme to another; fallen from Scylla to
 " Charybdis ;

great prophet, must have some foundation in truth. My persuasion arises from considering, that never did the professed objects, and the pursuits of any two missionaries correspond so exactly, as do his, and those of Mahomed. This will appear by recollecting, that the chief end of Mahomed's mission was—not to plant a new religion; but only to restore that which, according to him, had been practised by Adam, Noah, Moses, and Jesus Christ, all of whom he allowed to have been great prophets. Now this, he said, was to be done, by rooting out all the corruptions which the Jews, and the Christians, had successively introduced into the true faith; and, by re-establishing the ancient, orthodox opinions respecting the unity of God. Think of these things: and then recollect Dr. Priestley's creed.—The Doctor really has nothing to do in order to confirm his mission, and to prepare for the Hegira; but, in farther imitation of the Arabian prophet, to get on his night-cap, and take a nocturnal trip from Birmingham, to Essex-Street; and thence to Heaven—where, happily for the good cause in which he is engaged, he runs no great risk of being long detained.

“ Charybdis; from Popish innovations, supersti-
 “ tions and prelatical tyranny, to damnable here-
 “ sies, horrid blasphemies, libertinism and fearful
 “ anarchy : our evils are not removed and cured,
 “ but only changed ; one disease and devil hath left
 “ us, and another as bad is come in the room, —
 “ The worst of the Prelates in the midst of many
 “ Popish Arminian tenets, and Popish innovations,
 “ held many sound doctrines, and had many com-
 “ mendable practices : but many of the Sects
 “ and Sectaries, in our days deny all principles of
 “ religion ; are enemies to holy duties, order,
 “ learning—overthrowing all, being *vertiginosi spi-*
 “ *ritus*, whirligig spirits : and the great opinion of
 “ an universal toleration tends to the laying of all
 “ waste, and dissolution of all religion and good
 “ manners *.”

The plea of *merit*, set up by the Dissenters, can-
 not avail them much, in any application which they
 may make for the repeal of the Tests, so long as
 their merit does not exceed that of an equal num-
 ber of churchmen. But, it can avail them no-
 thing, if the total amount of their numbers be
 found, while all other things are equally favourable
 to churchmen, to be inferiour to the total amount
 of the numbers of the churchmen. Now, the

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* Gangræna.

whole amount of the numbers of the Dissenters, is greatly inferiour to the whole amount of the numbers of the churchmen; and, while this is the case, all other things are not equally favourable to both parties. The deserts of the former are considerably smaller than those of the latter; their religious principles, and tenets being much less congenial to monarchy. This is a capital circumstance. It is one the force of which the Dissenters cannot destroy, without first making it to appear, either that the English Constitution is not worth preserving; or, that they are prepared to offer to their countrymen a better one. But, the English Constitution is very well worth preserving; the *consensio firma gentium* having stamped it as invaluable. And, until the Dissenters produce their new constitution, it cannot be deemed unfair to conclude, that it is not better than that of which they would deprive us. I therefore assert, that it is the duty of the legislature to refuse to abolish the Corporation and Test Acts; or even, in any respect, to diminish their influence.

Let it next be admitted, that, although the circumstance which has just been mentioned as a drawback from the deserts of the non-conformists be not removed; yet, it is one that may possibly be balanced. Let it also be admitted, that the
 numbers

numbers of the non-conformists are not less, but greater than those of the friends of the Church. I now desire to know—whether this superiority of numbers be a circumstance sufficient to balance the one already mentioned.—The non-conformists, according to the hypothesis, constitute a majority of the nation. The majority of the nation, it may be taken for granted, wish for a repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts. But, as the repeal of these Acts would ruin our mixed constitution, this question presents itself, Whether would the subversion of the constitution; or, a non-compliance, on the part of the legislature, with the wishes of a majority of the nation; be the greater evil? What for an evil the former would be, there is no difficulty in conceiving. But, what sort of an evil would the latter be? This query may be answered with ease, if we consider that the majority, properly speaking, now is, not the whole of the Dissenters; but only so many of them as compose the difference between the total number of them, and that of the churchmen.—I know not what other men may think of this matter. As for me, I am for preserving our glorious constitution—even at the risk of disobliging a few non-conformists. And, therefore, I cannot think, that the second circumstance is sufficient to counterbalance the first.

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The Irish have abolished their Test laws. They have done so, however, not because the Non-conformists constitute a majority in their island: but, because it is better for a nation to endanger their constitution, than to submit to an immediate subjugation of their country by a foreign enemy. They surrendered the Tests: but they surrendered them—as nothing less than the price of their political salvation. Great Britain, thank God, is better circumstanced; those of her inhabitants of whom the majority, both in Parliament, and out of it, is composed, being a far more loyal people. She is, therefore, under no necessity of parting with that, with which Ireland has parted.

The Irish legislators, by the way, have not enacted, that the Romish religion, the friends of which constitute a majority of the Irish people, shall be the established religion;—a step which they ought to have taken, if the theories of the enemies of episcopacy be substantial. That they have not done; nor are they likely to do it, while they continue to be of opinion, that, let majorities among religionists shift as they may, the interests of their monarchical constitution will always be very nearly what they are at present. That best rampart of their constitution—the episcopal establishment—they have left in the hands of those who have long
 2 endeavoured

endeavoured to repel the attacks of aspiring foes, being well aware, that it could not be demolished, or translated, without drawing down after it, or hurrying along in its vortex, the whole political fabrick.

The ecclesiastical establishment of England, resembles the civil, in almost the whole of its external organization: in its modes of governing, for instance; in the independence, and the respectability that flow from its revenues*; and, in the dignity, and

* “According to your maxims,” (says Dr. Priestley in his letters to Mr. Burke) “a rich establishment should make its clergy more respected than a poor one. But does this appear to be the case, on the comparison of the state of the clergy in Scotland, and those in this country? Dr. Adam Smith, who well knew them both, was of a very different opinion; and the most superficial observer must be sensible that he is in the right. Nay, so unfortunate is the situation of the clergy in this country (for it cannot be any thing, but their *situation*, *men* being the same in all countries) that, by the confession of many persons in the establishment itself, there are no clergy in Christendom more negligent of their proper duty, less strict in their morals, and consequently more despised, than they are.”

I do not deny that Dr. Smith is, upon the whole, right—with regard to what he says, both of the effects produced by the ample revenues of some churches; and of those produced by the scanty incomes of others. But, I deny that he thinks differently from those who hold, “that a rich establishment should make
“its

and the decorum that result from its various orders. In the last of these particulars, the resemblance is striking.

"its clergy more respected than a poor one." I accordingly affirm, that Dr. Priestley is wrong in trying to sanction his absurdities, by alleging that Dr. Adam Smith was capable of cherishing similar ones. Let us see what Dr. Smith has said of the Scotch clergy, in common with the clergy of other presbyterian countries.

"Where the church benefices are all nearly equal, none of them can be very great; and this mediocrity of benefice, though it may no doubt be carried too far, has, however, some very agreeable effects. Nothing but the most exemplary morals can give dignity to a man of small fortune. The vices of levity and vanity necessarily render him ridiculous, and are, besides, almost as ruinous to him as they are to the common people. In his own conduct, therefore, he is obliged to follow that system of morals which the common people respect the most. He gains their esteem and affection by that plan of life which his own interest and situation would lead him to follow. The common people look upon him with that kindness with which we naturally regard one who approaches somewhat to our own condition, but who, we think, ought to be in a higher. Their kindness naturally provokes his kindness. He becomes careful to instruct them, and attentive to assist and relieve them. He does not even despise the prejudices of people who are disposed to be so favourable to him, and never treats them with those contemptuous and arrogant airs which we so often meet with in the proud dignitaries of opulent and well endowed churches. The presbyterian clergy, accordingly, have more influence over the minds
" of

striking. If the civil establishment present you with gentry; peers of different degrees; and a monarch

“ of the common people than perhaps the clergy of any other
 “ established church. It is accordingly in presbyterian countries
 “ only that we ever find the common people converted, without
 “ persecution, completely, and almost to a man, to the estab-
 “ lished church.” *Wealth of Nations*, Vol. II. p. 403, quarto
 edition.

I am disposed to make a few strictures on this passage; not, however, for the purpose of controverting any thing advanced by Dr. Smith: but, in order to show how far his opinions are from answering to the account given of them by Dr. Priestley, —“ Where the church benefices are all nearly equal, none of
 “ them can be very great; and this mediocrity of benefice,
 “ though it may no doubt be carried too far, has, however,
 “ some very agreeable effects” By “mediocrity” of benefice, Dr. Smith evidently means *smallness* of benefice. He says, that this smallness “has some very agreeable effects;” but he also says, that “it may, no doubt, be carried too far.” He, therefore, seems to have thought, that smallness, as well as greatness of benefice, may be attended with objectionable circumstances. The greatness of our benefices is not offensive to episcopalians: and, if the non-conformists occasionally rail against it, it is well known that they do so—not so much on its own account, as on that of the smallness of their stipends.—“ Nothing but the most exemplary morals can give dignity to
 “ a man of small fortune.” This circumstance is an evil in the lot of the Scotch clergy; as, in consequence of it, those of them whose morals happen not to be “the most exemplary,” can have no dignity at all. Can any thing else than “the
 “ most exemplary morals,” give dignity to a clergyman? Can
 a large

monarch who is the fountain of honours, and of political power: in like manner, the ecclesiastical holds

a large fortune do so? It can go a great way towards doing so; as may fairly be inferred from the turn of Dr. Smith's expression. The English clergy, therefore, have some means of acquiring dignity, which the Scotch have not. But, if to a large fortune, the English clergy add, as they frequently do, "the most exemplary morals,"—what then will be the state of their dignity? Will not the dignity of any given number of them, greatly exceed that of any equal number of poor, Scotch, presbyterian ministers? The truth is, that, mankind in general, churchmen as well as laymen, are respected more, or less, in proportion as they are richer, or poorer. Had Dr. Moore been, to this day, nothing but a worthy Rector receiving his stipend of neat three hundred pounds per annum; would he always have been treated with as much respect, as he is now that he is in the receipt of the princely revenues of our first archiepiscopal see? Would those associating with the Duke of Bedford—the Duke of York, for instance, the Duke of Marlborough, &c. respect his Grace as much, as they now do, were his income reduced to that of a Dissenting Minister, *i. e.* to 70, or 80*l.* per annum? Is it customary with Joseph Priestley, LL. D. &c. to treat with equal respect, the poor man who taps at his door to crave a halfpenny; and the wealthy manufacturer who knocks aloud, and, upon entering, gives him an account of the accessions every day making to his fortune? And has the Doctor no more respect for a person who pays, with ease, ten pounds annually towards the support of him and his Meeting; than for one who pays, with difficulty, ten shillings; or, perhaps, only ten pence?—"The vices of levity and vanity necessarily
" render

holds forth to you—the vicars, and the rectors;
the prebendaries, &c. and the prelates; together with
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“render the presbyterian ministers ridiculous, and are, besides,
“almost as ruinous to them as they are to the common people.”
Yet, when some of the presbyterian Ministers, who possess the
wherewithal, happen to get fairly beyond the ken of “the
“common people,” they are just as light, and as vain as their
neighbours.—“They are obliged to follow the system of
“morals which the common people respect the most.” There
is no merit in doing what one is obliged to do: though I cheer-
fully admit, that it is fortunate when one is so situated, that he
cannot avoid doing what is right. After all, the clergy of
Scotland are but men. As such they feel, and act: and London
contains several of them who have quitted their country on ac-
count of their immoral practices. Facts of this sort should in-
duce the sectaries to exercise a little charity in speaking of the
English clergy. They should suggest to them, that, if their
own brethren, prompted to vice by hardly any temptation, and
furnished with very few of the means through which men are
usually urged on to vicious pursuits, yet act viciously; some
allowance ought to be made for the departure from virtue of
those, who are frequently beset by allurements, and who are in
possession of almost every thing capable of forcing them out of
the straight path. The English clergy are ten times as nume-
rous as the Scotch. Now, if, being ten times as numerous,
they have just ten times as many seducements thrown in their
way, and are furnished with just ten times as many of the means
that prompt to immorality; they may be chargeable with a de-
gree of immorality ten times greater than that chargeable upon
the Scotch clergy (this is quite enough to keep up any cry that
may

the King "who," according to the memorable law of Henry VIII. "is taken and reputed the only
"supreme

may be raised against them) and yet be, man for man, as virtuous as they. But if, being only ten times more numerous, they have an hundred times more seducements thrown in their way (this they are supposed to have), and are furnished with an hundred times as many of the means that prompt to immorality (which they certainly are), and, after all, are justly chargeable with a degree of immorality not more than ten times greater than that justly chargeable upon the Scotch clergy; then, it is obvious, that they are not merely as virtuous as their northern fellow labourers in the same vineyard, but ten times more so. Far be it from me, however, to act so unchristianly as to allege, without the most irrefragable evidence of the fact, that any given number of the English clergy are ten times more virtuous than an equal number of the Scotch—*i. e.* that any given number of the Scotch clergy are ten times more vicious than an equal number of the English. I do not believe this, or any thing like this, to be the real fact. I believe the real fact to be, that, in regard to the practice of morality, the English clergy are neither better, nor worse than the Scotch. And the only ideas that I wish to impress upon any man's mind are these: if he should, on any occasion, hear of only ten times as many deviations from virtue having taken place, within a specified period, among the English clergy, as have taken place, within the same period, among the Scotch; he ought, upon duly weighing the circumstances of the difference of their numbers, of their temptations, and of their means of gratification, to consider the former as having been, during that period, less culpable than the latter;

supreme head on earth of the Church of England."

In all these respects, both ascend by corresponding
grada-

latter: and, if he shou'd, on any occasion, hear of considerably more than ten times, nay of any thing not more than an hundred times, as many of such deviations having taken place among the former, within any given space of time, as had taken place among the latter, within the same space, still he ought, upon weighing the circumstances already mentioned, to conclude, that the former are not more culpable than the latter.

—"The presbyterian clergy gain the esteem and affection of
"the common people, by that plan of life which their own in-
"terest and situation would lead them to follow." This is pec-
"uliarly fortunate. The episcopal clergy, if they would gain
the esteem and affection of (all) the common people, must often
follow a plan of life both detrimental to their interest, and in-
compatible with their situation: they must, in short, become
methodists.—"The common people look upon the presby-
"terian clergy with that kindness with which we naturally
"regard those who approach somewhat to our own condition,
"but who, we think, ought to be in a higher. The kindness
"of the former naturally provokes the kindness of the latter.
"They become careful to instruct, and attentive to assist and
"relieve them." This mutual intercourse of benevolence, and
of good offices, bears a close resemblance to that which subsists
between the common people of England, and the inferior or-
ders of the clergy. I do not speak of *all* the common people.
But neither did Dr. Smith speak of *all* of them. He was aware,
that from the Scotch, as well as from the English establishment,
a considerable number of the common people were, as they now
are, Dissenters.—"The presbyterian clergy do not even de-
"spise the prejudices of people who are disposed to be so fa-
"vourable

gradations; and, at length, terminate in the same elevated point.

There

“vourable to them.” To do so would be both imprudent, and ungrateful. — “They never treat the common people with those contemptuous and arrogant airs which we so often meet with in the proud dignitaries of opulent and well endowed churches.” To do this, considering that they approach so near to the condition in life of the common people, would be something worse than contempt and arrogance. Even in England, where the condition of the clergy (I allude to the dignitaries) is very far from being the same with that of the common people, these are not treated contemptuously and arrogantly. The dignitaries preach the gospel to all denominations of men. But, they do not live with the lower orders of them, on terms of intimacy and familiarity. Such a manner of life would very ill become them. They act more conformably to their high professional character, and are much better employed, when they converse with, and endeavour to reclaim, those to whose society none but ecclesiasticks of distinguished eminence are admitted. The superiour gentry, the nobles, and the princes of the land, are their suitable companions. The fellowship of persons in the middle walks of life, they leave to clergymen of ordinary rank. As for the rabble—them they consign, without remorse, to the Whitefields, the Westleys, and the Priestleys of the age. These things are as they ought to be. They prove the excellence of the English establishment. — “The presbyterian clergy have more influence over the minds of the common people than perhaps the clergy of any other established church.” Qualified with the word *perhaps*, this observation must, to all appear unexceptionable. But without such a qualifier, hardly any body would question the truth of it.

I shall,

There is also an obvious similarity in the spirit of our ecclesiastical, and of our civil institutions.

It

I shall, therefore, content myself with adding, that the influence of the established, presbyterian clergy of no country whatever, over the minds of the common people, ever was so great as is that of the ambulatory preachers of England over the minds of the vulgar. When Whitefield repaired to Scotland, his visitation of the different parishes in which he held forth, inspired into the minds of the ministers, and the elders, almost as much terror, as the approach of the fiercest military invader could have done. — “It is accordingly in presbyterian countries only that we ever find the common people converted, without persecution, completely, and almost to a man, to the established church.” In no country have the common people ever been completely converted to the established church. Yet, I own, that the conversion of them to the establishment, has been more nearly completed in presbyterian, than in other countries. Fifty years ago there were not many schismatics in Scotland. But, since that time, the pious work of perverting the common people from the established system, has gone on so rapidly among the Seceders, that the friends of the Kirk have now almost as much to do in order to effect a complete conversion, as have the friends of our Church. In Scotland, however, just as in England, very few except the hypocritical, or the ignorant, forsake the establishment. Good men, blessed with good sense, will, wherever they have an abode, rejoice in giving the preference to the national system of faith and worship—provided only that it be not less rational, and scriptural, than any rival system. — It cannot have escaped observation, that, every time Dr. Smith has mentioned the presbyterian clergy, he has been careful to

It is not in the English, as it is in the Romish Church, where almost every thing either of great,
or

connect them with THE COMMON PEOPLE. Indeed, he knew human nature too well to believe, that, circumstanced as they had always been, they could acquire considerable respectability among any other than the lower classes of men. By these the Scotch clergy doubtless are greatly respected. They are not, however, more respected by them, than the generality of the English vicars, and rectors are by the common people of their parishes. As to the higher classes of persons in Scotland, the clergy there are not supposed, by Dr. Smith, or by any body else, to possess much of their respect. But the English dignitaries are known to possess very much of the respect of the higher classes of their countrymen : and they do so for the very reason that the Scotch clergy possess so much of the respect of the COMMON PEOPLE of their part of the island—i. e. “ because they approach somewhat to their own condition.”

Dr. Smith proceeds thus : “ In countries where church benefices are the greater part of them very moderate, a chair in a university is generally a better establishment than a church benefice. The universities have, in this case, the picking and choosing of their members from all the churchmen of the country, who, in every country, constitute by far the most numerous class of men of letters. Where church benefices, on the contrary, are many of them very considerable, the church naturally draws from the universities the greater part of their eminent men of letters ; who generally find some patron who does himself honour by procuring them church preferment. In the former situation we are likely to find the universities filled with the most eminent men of letters that are to be found in the country. In the latter we are likely to
“ find

or of small moment, depends upon the will of one man who has no compeer. Nor is it with churchmen,

“ find few eminent men among them, and those few among
 “ the youngest members of the society, who are likely too to be
 “ drained away from it before they can have acquired experience
 “ and knowledge enough to be of much use to it.” — “ After
 “ the church of Rome, that of England, is by far the richest
 “ and best endowed church in Christendom. In England, ac-
 “ cordingly, the church is continually draining the universities
 “ of all their best and ablest members; and an old college tutor,
 “ who is known and distinguished in Europe as an eminent man
 “ of letters, is as rarely to be found there, as in any Roman
 “ catholick country. In Geneva, on the contrary, in the pro-
 “ testant cantons of Switzerland, in the protestant countries of
 “ Germany, in Holland, in Scotland, in Sweden, and Den-
 “ mark, the most eminent men of letters whom those countries
 “ have produced, have, not all indeed, but the far greater part
 “ of them, been professors in universities. In those countries
 “ the universities are continually draining the church of all its
 “ most eminent men of letters.”

Nothing can be found in all Dr. Smith's writings, that serves so well to enable us to judge of the comparative respectability of the clergy of South, and of North Britain, as does this well founded argument. The substance of it is, That the most learned men of England, which, being greatly more populous than Scotland, may be supposed to contain many more learned men than that country does, hasten out of her universities, into her church: while, the most learned men of Scotland, which, being considerably less populous than England, may be supposed to contain much fewer learned men than that country does, hasten out of her church, into her universities. Here I

men, as it is with certain descriptions of Protestant Dissenters, among whom the determination of questions whether trivial, or important, depends upon the judgment of a number of persons, none of whom possesses more authority than any other. In the church, just as in the state, the absolute sway neither of the *one*, nor of the *many*, is admitted. In the former, as in the latter, government is carried on by various powers happily combined. There is one who is acknowledged by our church to be supreme. But, there is none to whose decisions either in religious, or in civil matters, we attribute infallibility. And if we are exempt from this gross error of popery; so are we from the abominable ones by which some of the sects are characterised. We abhor those doctrines that would teach us to strip our Church of every thing decorous, and reverential; that would induce us to treat the best of Sovereigns, as if he were, in the worst sense of the word, "a servant;" that would tempt us to rejoice when the lawful rulers

put a question: Whether is a church into which there is a constant ingress of learned men; or one out of which there is a constant egress of learned men; the more likely to be respectable? Nay, I must be indulged in putting another question: Whether ought an order of persons that is learned, rich, and numerous; or one that is learned, but poor, and inconsiderable as to the number of its constituents; to be deemed the more respectable?

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of the earth are insulted over by the vilest of their subjects; in a word, that would prevail upon us to try

“ To make glory base; sovereignty a slave;

“ Proud majesty a subject; state a peasant.”

We are not inimical to distinctions; and we wish to maintain subordination. Our church admits of many gradations of rank; and her friends look with complacency, perhaps, at times, not without some degree of pride, on such of her dignities as are the most exalted. In all this they discern nothing culpable. In heaven itself there are various orders of beings, variously endowed, and beatified. If the spirits of just men made perfect reside there; so also do the angels of light; and One who is higher than the highest of these.

Should any one argue, that the episcopal church, notwithstanding its similitude to the civil government with regard both to its exterior form, and to its mild, benevolent spirit; is yet not more likely, than some one of the sects, to prove a trusty prop to the state—to him I would observe, That the temporal interests of the clergy depend, in a great measure, upon the monarchy, and the two Houses of Parliament, being continued in their present condition; while the temporal interests of the sectaries can be considerably promoted—only in consequence of some great change taking place in the

condition of all the branches of the legislature. Render innovation impracticable ; and you render the sects hopeless. Besides, if the jargon of these lovers of change, about " the natural rights of man," be duly considered, it will occur, that it would lead them to aim at an universal equalization of mankind. It could never square with their professed principles ; or appear consistent in their history (having once killed their sovereign) ; to permit a king to be the head of the church. And, it would be abhorrent from their ideas of original rights ; and totally irreconcilable to the tenour of their conduct ; to acknowledge, as their legislators, Bishops, and Lords, whom they once degraded, and whom they are now busied in vilifying and traducing. As to the Representatives of the people—I know not what they might be disposed to make of them. They might, as Cromwell did, debauch the army ; and, having done this, send it to dissolve the subsisting house of commons, and to constitute a new one of persons judiciously selected from the ranks. Or, if their chiefs should not choose to imitate the pious Protector, in thus making the soldiery the instruments of their many-headed, and many-handed tyranny, it would probably be expected by the great body of their friends, that, as foes both to civil, and to ecclesiastical controul, they should, by some means or other, get rid of

the Parliament; and then—solemnly pronounce every congregation of the saints to be sufficiently qualified to legislate for itself. This extravagant thing they might do; and yet excite no wonder.

—But, if they should resolve, not to have soldiers for their lawgivers, and yet to give the nation something that might merit the appellation of a general legislature, still their new legislature would consist of only one branch; and of a branch, too, composed entirely of levellers. This puritanical assembly would exhibit, in all their glory, presbyterians, and independents, and baptists; and, perhaps, papists, and quakers—although the probability now is, that these, with some other sects of inferior note, would be proscribed. The Arians, and the Socinians have not presumed, as distinct bodies, to show their fronts among those who have assailed the Corporation and Test Acts. They, however, are not likely to go unrewarded, when “the reign of the saints” recommences. For, those of them who are ashamed of their tenets, mingle with the other sects; and such as have avowed them, can allege those works of supererogation which they have reared upon the holy ground of an implacable hatred to the establishment.

But, if the Dissenters be permitted to *benefit* the empire, by what they may call “an adequate reformation,”

“formation,” what will be the fate of the Church? Will she be ruined? Yes; and the godly work will be performed with a degree of madness greater than any that the world has yet beheld. Yet, her adherents will be spared. And will they have those blessings of toleration extended to them, that are now so freely extended to the Sects? Will the revenues torne from the clergy, be suffered to devolve upon the publick? Or, will their privileges, and their honours, either be disused, or suppressed? The sects have, by insinuation, furnished an answer to all these queries. For, they have told us, that they are, as good Christians ought to be, *meek and unassuming*. Trust them not ye legislators!

“ ——— lowliness is young ambition’s ladder,” &c.

The repugnancy of the principles of the greater number of non-conformists, to every species of subordination, is, thank God, well known both to our statesmen, and to our prelates. It is known to both so well, that they are of opinion, that the Papists, dangerous as they may be in several respects, are yet, upon the whole, more meritorious members of society than certain denominations of protestant dissenters. Papists are fond, they are too fond, of “principalities and powers.” Their overweening fondness for these, however, is far from
having

having always been mischievous ; or even useless. Nay, it has, at times, been serviceable. The Ministers of State are not ignorant, that it is owing, in a principal degree, to the partiality of the papists to monarchy, that Great Britain is now in possession of the province of Canada. And it is no secret among the Ministers of religion, that a Bishop will, with much less hesitation, admit to holy orders a proselyte from the Romish church, than one from any of the English protestant sects, or even from the establishment of Scotland. In this matter they judge wisely.

The characters of the churchmen, and of the protestant dissenters of England, are ably drawn by Sir William Blackstone. “ It is the glory of the
 “ church of England, that she inculcates due obe-
 “ dience to lawful authority, and hath been (as her
 “ prelates on a trying occasion once expressed it)
 “ in her principles and practice ever most unques-
 “ tionably loyal. The clergy of her persuasion,
 “ holy in their doctrines, and unblemished in their
 “ lives and conversation, are also moderate in their
 “ ambition, and entertain just notions of the ties of
 “ society and the rights of civil government. As
 “ in matters of faith and morality they acknowledge
 “ no guide but the scriptures, so, in matters of ex-
 “ ternal polity and of private right, they derive all
 “ their

“ their title from the civil magistrate ; they look
 “ up to the king as their head, to the parliament
 “ as their law-giver, and pride themselves in no-
 “ thing more justly, than in being true members of
 “ the church, emphatically *by law* established.
 “ Whereas the notions of ecclesiastical liberty, in
 “ those who differ from them, as well in one ex-
 “ treme as the other, (for here I only speak of
 “ extremes) are equally and totally destructive of
 “ those ties and obligations by which all society is
 “ kept together ; equally encroaching on those
 “ rights, which reason and the original contract of
 “ every free state in the universe have vested in the
 “ sovereign power ; and equally aiming at a distant
 “ independent supremacy of their own, where spi-
 “ ritual men and spiritual causes are concerned.
 “ The dreadful effects of such a religious bigotry,
 “ when actuated by erroneous principles, even of
 “ the protestant kind, are sufficiently evident from
 “ the history of the anabaptists in Germany, the
 “ covenanters of Scotland, and that deluge of sec-
 “ taries in England, who murdered their Sovereign,
 “ overturned the church and monarchy, shook every
 “ pillar of law, justice, and private property ; and
 “ most devoutly established a kingdom of saints in
 “ their stead *.”

If

* Commentaries, Vol. IV.

If it be possible that Englishmen can be but feebly attached to such a church as that which they enjoy—a church very venerable from her antiquity; highly distinguished by the learning, the piety, and the extensive benevolence of her members; and rendered illustrious, throughout all generations, by the exemplary sufferings of her pastors, to the intrepidity and fortitude of one of whom even Voltaire ascribes more praise than is said to have been due to Mutius Scævola in consequence of that deed which conferred immortality upon his name: if it be possible that Englishmen can be but feebly attached to their church when considered by herself, let them have some small portion of love for her, on account of the close resemblance which she bears to that civil system which they so justly admire; and let them not feel insensibly towards her when they recollect, that, during every reverse of fortune to which the state has been exposed, her ally, her sister has manifested the strongest fidelity and affection—having, at no time, sought to rise without beholding her by her side; and having never betrayed a wish to remain exalted, while she was likely to be depressed. Her rational, peaceful, scriptural doctrines, together with the very salutary effects which they are calculated to produce upon society; have charms enough for me. Yet, these are multiplied every time that I view her in the additional capacity

capacity of the main supporter of our matchless, mixed constitution: —I say *matchless*—because, in spite of all the virtue of names, I am partial to a duly circumscribed, kingly government.

I like to read of the fervour of the ancient republicans. And it affords me joy to behold republics subsisting, in these times, under circumstances that render such institutions eligible. But, circumstanced as Britain now is—charged with the protection of extensive, distant colonies; and abounding in affluence, and in all the refinements and embellishments to which affluence gives rise; I would rather that her old, plain, useful monarchical government were preserved, than that she should receive the fairest system which any club of democrats ever conceived. When the imagination represents millions of republicans assembling in peace and order to debate, and to determine upon what shall be law; and sending up their joyful and accordant acclamations to the very skies; one's heart exults—and he fancies that he has witnessed that which cannot but be pleasing to the Lord of the Universe himself. As soon, however, as reason begins to exert her powers, he discovers that the ideas which had glided through his mind, though exhilarating, were but illusory. If such ideas, indeed, were not illusory, pure democracy would be the perfection of wisdom; and, by way of prepar-
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ing for its establishment among us, I should begin to pray, that all manner of vice might speedily quit our island; and that the lamb and the wolf might begin to lie down together. But they are illusory: and, if they were not, I know not why one should expect such a prayer to be favourably heard. Upon the whole, I can think of nothing calculated to console such of my countrymen as have been smitten with the love of pure democracy, except the doctrine of the metempsychosis; by embracing which they may have the felicity of hoping for those things in a future state, that have been withheld from them in this. Should I ever experience the truth of the Pythagorean theory, may a kind destiny preserve me from that hard lot which Dr. Franklin is known to have deprecated: "May I not be appointed Dr. Priestley's "amanuensis!" The arch American alluded to the multitude of his friend's very dry, and very superficial performances; which, by the way, has increased much since it appeared to him so astonishingly great.

What is it, after all, at which the Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists aim? Religious toleration for themselves*? No. That they already

* Mr. Thomas Paine, in the 74th page of the same paradoxical production in which he asserts, *That the English have no civil constitution*, deliriously calls toleration *despotism*!

enjoy.

enjoy. Is it, then, toleration for some other description of Dissenters;—for the Quakers, for instance, or for the Romanists? No. The former of these do not complain of their condition; nor do they desire the interference of any of their busy brethren: while the latter have long been, and still are, suspected and abhorred by almost every adherent to the three officious sects. Of the reality of this last fact, the memorable phrensy of the year 1780 is no bad evidence†.

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† The recent application of the Catholicks, for the repeal of certain penal statutes which bear unnecessarily hard upon them, was admirably well timed. Had it been made in any session between the year 1780, and that in which the Protestant Dissenters began to disturb the publick tranquillity in the vain hope of getting rid of the Corporation and Test Acts; riots like those that were headed by Lord George Gordon, would have followed. The Catholicks were aware of this. Observing, however, that the Dissenters had clamoured much about “the injustice and cruelty of *all restraints whatsoever imposed on account of men’s religious tenets,*” in every session since Mr. Beaufoy undertook to plead their cause; but most of all in the last session of the late Parliament; the Catholicks very prudently preferred their plea in the first session of the present Parliament, reasonably enough concluding, that their bitterest enemies (the only enemies indeed which useful toleration has in this country) could not, upon recollecting what they themselves had just been saying and doing, have the effrontery to stand forward in opposition to their claim.—The Dissenters seem to be far from understanding the influence of times and seasons so well as the Romanists do. In
stead

The truth is, that the Protestant Dissenters have long had more objects in view than one: and objects very like those which they have had in view, are couched in the following words of the great Roman general. *Omnes aut de honoribus suis, aut de præmiis pecuniæ, aut de persequendis inimicis agebant.* These things, in spite of every fair profession to the contrary, are still the primary incentives to the conduct of the sects; while the mere discontinuance of the use of the sacrament as a civil Test, is but a secondary one. Yet, the discontinuance of the use of the holy sacrament as a Test of attachment to the constitution, would be very gratifying to the Sects: for it would be the removal of the highest bar that now crosses the way leading to the prizes for which they contend.—One of their principals, at a meeting held at Bolton in Lancashire, in order to determine about the most effectual method of applying to Parliament for the repeal of the Tests, told Mr. Fletcher, a correspondent of Mr. Burke's, that “the Dissenters did not care the nip of a straw for
 instead of waiting for a period in which the minds of churchmen might have been lulled into security; they (there was adventure in their conduct) mustered their forces, and made their main assault upon the establishment, at the very moment in which the sacrilegious procedure of the free-thinkers of France had given the alarm to every christian church in Europe.

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“ the repeal of those acts ; but that they designed
 “ to try for the abolition of Tythes, the Liturgy,
 “ &c.” And Dr. Priestley, in a printed letter addressed to Mr. Pitt, expresses himself thus : “ It
 “ has been said, that if the Dissenters gain their
 “ point, they will aim at something more. This
 “ I acknowledge : we shall ask many things more ;
 “ because there are many things more that we conceive ourselves entitled to.”

A liberal minded man will not pronounce the sectaries altogether inexcusable, in wishing to have the liturgy set aside ; as it will occur to him, that, if they really believe their respective opinions to be the true ones, they must, in obedience to conscience, desire to see none but them generally received. Nor will such a man think it strange, that the sectaries should be somewhat covetous of objects so attractive as are the emoluments, and the honours of the establishment ; or that they should long to have the pleasure of whispering to churchmen—Ecclesiastical authority has at length changed hands. It must, however, be observed, that reasons not unlike those which induce the enemies of the Church to look malignantly on the liturgy ; and wishfully on her emoluments, her honours, and her authority ; ought to prompt her friends to take their ground with a determination to defend her, and her appurtenances at all times,
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and in the face of every species of danger. So enviable did these good things appear to the puritans in the reign of James the Second, that, in order to get possession of them, they would have been content to expose themselves to all the sad consequences of popish machinations. At present, they, perhaps, would not hazard quite so much. But, were they resolved to hazard every thing, still their resolution would not be alarming; the objects of their ambition being placed greatly beyond their reach.

The liturgy of the church is safe, and will ever be safe, through the zeal, and the superiour faculties of her numerous advocates; who, thinking that it is incumbent on christians to render to God none but "a reasonable service," will take care that her form of worship sustain no injury. Her revenues have been put out of danger by the exertions of Warburton, and his followers; of whom Mr. Burke is far from being the least considerable. This gentleman, in reasoning upon the confiscation of ecclesiastical property, seems to have lighted on some of the unripe offspring of sectarian policy, and to have worried them in the very nest. As to the dignities of the establishment—the king, and the nobles, cannot suffer them to be invaded, without having ceased to know the value of those with which they themselves are clothed. Now, if

the liturgy; and also the revenues, and the dignities of the church, be preserved; so, also, must her power and authority.

The ostensible objects of those who have applied for a repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, are, To prevent the sacrament from being prostituted, by being used as a qualification for an office: and, to wipe off the disgrace; and to remove the hardships; of being proscribed through the operation of those laws.

Is the sacrament of the Lord's supper ever received, or ever administered, with a view to add to the qualifications of a candidate for publick employment?

It is impossible for any one to know what were the views of all those who have served, or who now serve the publick, the last time, previously to their entering into the publick service, at which they received the sacrament: and, therefore, it ought not to be expected that I should give an account of them. But, every one may safely answer, both for those who framed the Corporation and Test Acts, and for those who officiate at the Altar, that nothing so nugatory, and so absurd, as the idea of a man's becoming better acquainted with the duties of an office in consequence of his having been a communicant of the established church, ever entered their minds. A person who has not communicated in
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the established church, may be fit to perform all the functions of some specified civil department; while one who has communicated, may be unfit: yet, the laws declare, that the former shall on no account be placed in such a department, at the same time that they interpose no bar whatever between it and the latter. What reason can be given for a preference apparently so unjust? The following: If any person have not communicated in the established church within a certain space of time, it is extremely difficult to judge whether he be actuated more by friendship, or by enmity, towards it: but, if he have communicated in it within the same space of time, it is presumed, that the principle of friendship is predominant; and the existence, or the non-existence of this principle, is that important fact which our law-givers have resolved shall, if possible, be ascertained. As to the candidate's fitness, or his unfitness, to discharge his duty properly, it is taken for granted, that the discretion of the person, or persons, possessing the right of appointment, will always lead to the best decision with regard to that matter. A man's compliance with the injunctions contained in the Test laws, is not required in order to make it appear whether he be a wise man, or a fool; a person capable of serving his country, or one incapable of serving it; but, solely that, through such compliance, he may furnish the most

satisfactory evidence that can be demanded of his amicable, or, at least, of his pacifick disposition towards the establishment. It may be argued, that as a man may act in a publick capacity with this compliance, but not without it; so, his receiving the sacrament may be said to add to his qualifications. But, to argue thus would be to argue fallaciously. For, he receives the sacrament, as has already been hinted, for the purpose of proving the existence of a certain disposition towards the establishment; but not at all for the purpose of creating such a disposition. This disposition, indeed, is the chief of all his qualifications. His receiving the sacrament, therefore, is the evidence of the being of one of his qualifications. But, between a qualification, and the evidence of its being, there is no necessary connexion. Bishop Sherlock has shown, with great acuteness, that there is none: and his reasoning on the topick is conclusive.

When a person in authority demands of you, whether, or not, you have received the sacrament agreeably to the conditions of the Test laws, he needs not to suppose that you have received it for a purpose so very foreign from its original intention, as that of rendering yourself eligible to some vacant office. As a proof of this (the idea, or one very like it, is Sherlock's) I who communicated five
months

months ago—at a time when I had no reason to think that I should ever be called upon to act in a publick capacity—have just heard that I was this day nominated to a publick employment: and, by having communicated at that time, I am prepared to give the requisite evidence, or test, of my attachment to the church. The person in authority will deem my having then communicated, as effectual a compliance with the terms of the law, as he would my having done so yesterday: and, while he will do this, I shall have the satisfaction of reflecting, that I partook of the Lord's supper with no other view than that which a good christian ought to have; in a word, that I did not “prostitute it, by making it a qualification.”—An argument raised on this ground would serve to prove, to every reasonable man's satisfaction, that the conditions of the Corporation, and Test Acts, may be fulfilled, and yet the sacrament never once be used in order to render candidates for civil offices eligible. It would also serve to prove, that, if the sacrament be, indeed, sometimes prostituted by such candidates, the criminality of doing so is justly imputable, not to the badness of the Acts, but to the depravity of the candidates.

The sectaries have treated the Corporation, and Test laws, with unmerited harshness. While these

laws are among the greatest of publick goods; they certainly are the least of private ills. To episcopals who lead regular, religious lives, they are no ills; such persons being, at all times, prepared to give a satisfactory evidence of their attachment to the constitution. And, even to Dissenters, they are ills of little moment; as, while they benefit them by their general operation on society, they do not leave them without an easy alternative. Whenever Dissenters are forbidden by their consciences to communicate in the national church, they have it in their power to save their consciences, by relinquishing to others, who think better than they do of the national church, the enjoyment of the national emoluments and honours.

But is it, indeed, the single circumstance of being obliged, before publick employments are entered upon, to have received the sacrament according to the rites of our excellent establishment, which has induced the non-conformists to object so warmly to the Corporation and Test Acts? Would they be entirely satisfied, were they required to evince their attachment to the constitution by solemnly swearing, that neither directly, nor indirectly—by writing, by speaking, or by acting, would they, at any time, aim at injuring the national church?—By the way, the Tests now subsisting

listings are not so comprehensive, and forcible as they ought to be. Persons about to fill publick stations should be compelled to declare in *express terms*, that they are not enemies (perhaps that they are friends) to the establishment. Conscientious Dissenters, no doubt, who complain that they only are now excluded, might, by such means, be deprived even of their *hopes* of enjoying the emoluments, and the honours of office. So much the better. Conscientious Dissenters (as the more pharisaical of the sectaries style themselves) and they only, are dangerous; as none but they are actuated by inveterate prejudices in favour of their own persuasions, and against those of Churchmen; as none but they think it proper to intrigue for the purpose of making converts; and, as none else will disturb the publick peace, for the sake of private opinion.

With regard to the story of *proscription*, the Dissenters must allow, not only that the legislature has a right to interfere in all matters, whether civil, or ecclesiastical, in which the community is interested; but, also, that the legislature is the most competent judge of what is good for the community. It is observed by Archdeacon Paley, who, in some respects, writes in favour of the establishment as those ought to do who enjoy its emoluments

ments and honours, that " There is nothing in the
 " nature of religion, as *such*, which exempts it
 " from the authority of the legislator, when the
 " safety or welfare of the community requires his
 " interposition. — The state," he adds, " un-
 " doubtedly has a right to refuse its power and its
 " confidence to those who seek its destruction,
 " Wherefore, if the generality of any religious sect
 " entertain dispositions hostile to the constitution,
 " and if government have no other way of know-
 " ing its enemies than by the religion they profess,
 " the professors of that religion may justly be
 " excluded from offices of trust and authority."

— These principles are sound: and, were par-
 liament to abolish the Tests, and to proceed to act
 upon such principles, a very large proportion of
 the sectaries, nay all of them, would be proscribed.
 But, as the Tests are still in use, the sectaries are no
 more liable to proscription than churchmen are;
 and, consequently, the topick of proscription
 ought not to be assumed as a ground on which
 to make a stand against the decisions of the legis-
 lature.

The Dissenters cannot justly complain of the
 Corporation and Test Acts, as being calculated to
 reflect *disgrace* upon them — These acts may, in-
 deed,

deed, be considered as the indexes of something in the characters of those who refuse to have their principles tried by them, which most worthy citizens would blush to own. But, they are intended to point to nothing in the characters of those who are willing to have their principles tried by them, of which any citizen might not be proud. Those who dispense justice to the nation; the great Ministers of State; and even the Princes of the blood, are not exempted from complying with the conditions which they prescribe. And why should sectaries be indulged with such an exemption?—His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales could not have acted as Regent of these realms, had he been unable to manifest his attachment to the established church, by making it appear, that he had communicated in it within the specified period.

Nor ought the dissenters to deem the circumstance of their being sometimes excluded from office, through means of the Corporation, or the Test act, a *hardship*.—For, the object of neither of these acts is of a penal nature. It consists not in punishing those who will not conform; but in protecting such as do. “It would be very unreasonable,” says that excellent writer Bishop Sherlock, “to beat a man because he has an infectious distemper; yet it is very reasonable to deny him a place in the family, upon this account; for in one case I should
“injure

“injure him, in the other I only take care of my-
 “self.” The Acts in question are mere instruments
 of defence; and instruments with which, as the
 non-conformists have observed, the state very fel-
 dom inflicts a wound. They are, however, instru-
 ments with which the state could inflict many a
 wound—yes, and deep ones too.

If the exclusion from office of such Dissenters as
 will not communicate in the established church, be a
 hardship, it must be allowed to be one not only of
 a very general nature, but borne for the best of
 purposes—for that, namely, of promoting the pub-
 lick good, on account of which all of us give up
 many of our natural, and, not a few of us, some of
 our political, and civil rights. The Commissioners
 of the Customs, and of the Excise, as well as those
 who act under them; gentlemen filling depart-
 ments in many of the publick offices, and even in
 the two Houses of Parliament; all such persons,
 by accepting of their several appointments, preclude
 themselves not only from voting at elections, but
 from obtaining seats among the representatives of
 the people. Those too employed in the Navy, in
 the Army, and even in the Militia, are deprived of
 the benefits of the trial by jury, from the moment
 in which they enter his Majesty's service.—Is the
 case of the Non-conformists harder than that of
 persons

persons coming under the various descriptions here enumerated? Being infected with the political vices that have, for more than two centuries, clung to them, the Non-conformists are doomed to mortify the flesh, not for the sake of the service of their king and country, but for the sake of conscience—in other words, to forego the sweets of office, that they may enjoy the comforts of those peculiar forms of worship of which they approve. And do these comforts appear to them small matters? They are what they choose to retain in lieu of publick appointments: and seem they to them to be of less value than a gauge, or a halberd, which countervail the sacrifices made by the exciseman, and the serjeant? From the dissatisfaction so frequently expressed, one cannot but suspect that they do.

But, the exclusion from office of such Dissenters as will not communicate in the established Church is, in reality, no hardship—or, as it has elsewhere been expressed, “no grievance.” Yet, from this grievance, supposed or imaginary, the Dissenters call aloud to be relieved. “From what grievance?” “From the grievance of being excluded from publick offices of profit and authority. But if the law, as it now stands, exclude them from these, it also excuses them from offices of burthen, then, It was the solemn opinion of the Judges, parti-

“ particularly of Mr. Justice Forster and Mr.
 “ Justice Wilmot, in the famous case of Allen
 “ Evans, that the immunity on the one hand com-
 “ pensates the inability on the other; and, as
 “ equal forces acting in opposite directions, de-
 “ stroy each other’s separate effects, the total effect
 “ of the Test laws upon the body of the Dissen-
 “ ters, is neither grievance nor advantage. But
 “ where no grievance hath taken place, no relief
 “ can be afforded *.” — All the Dissenters who
 have taken notice of the immunity mentioned in
 this demonstration, have asserted, that it is not
 adequate to the advantages of which they are
 deprived. Granting, for the sake of argument,
 that it is not altogether adequate to those advan-
 tages, still the Dissenters are far from being justi-
 fiable in complaining so incessantly, and so loudly
 as they do. It seems to me that it would be a
 mark of their wisdom to give over clamouring
 about what they, as separate, and comparatively
 inconsiderable bodies of men, want to enjoy; and
 to recollect what it is that the *salus populi* demands
 from them. It likewise seems to me that it would
 become them well, to take a lesson of moderation
 from the established Clergy. Of this virtue in the
 Clergy

• A Review of the Case of the Protestant Dissenters.

Clergy I shall mention but one instance. Because they sit in the Convocation, they are not allowed, as the Dissenting Ministers are, the privilege of becoming members of the lower House of Parliament. But sitting in the Convocation is, at present, to none of the clergy more than a ceremony; while to most of them it is less than a ceremony—it is nothing. To all of them, therefore, it must be a very inadequate compensation for the want of the privilege of ranking with the representatives of the people. Yet, the publick have, at no time, seen the clergy forming seditious combinations, or heard them uttering expressions of discontent, on account of its inadequacy.

A retrospect to the cause of the complaints uttered by the Dissenters; to the nature of their pretensions; and to their principles religious, and political; leaves us very much in the dark with regard to the foundation on which they rest their hope, if any hope they have, of succeeding in their present enterprise against the establishment.

“No Bishop, no King,” was one of the maxims of James the First: and none ever was more solid, or better entitled to the constant remembrance of those who wish to see Great Britain continue in the enjoyment of her excellent civil constitution. James, no doubt, entertained most extravagant and absurd notions respecting the rights of Kings.

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But, he must have reasoned and judged, moderately and rationally, before he clearly perceived, that an intimate, vital union subsisted between episcopacy and monarchy. William III. who is not supposed to have been an enemy either to civil, or to religious liberty, thought, and spoke precisely as James had done. And, all the Sovereigns who have reigned over us since William's time, have followed his example. A British King, indeed, has the most substantial of all reasons for thinking well of the Church; and for wishing her to prosper. She upholds his throne. Her religion is that which he is bound to profess, and to practise. And, by an oath taken at his coronation, he is obliged to maintain her doctrines, and her prerogatives. By British Kings, therefore, those who dissent from the established church need not, and ought not, to expect to be countenanced, in any of their attempts to procure the abolition of those acts of the legislature, which have been framed for the important purpose of enabling such as are clothed with authority, to discriminate her friends, from her foes.

As to the Ministers of Kings, I know not how they could be entitled to the appellation of "his Majesty's faithful servants;" or, upon what ground they could hope for a continuance of the royal favour; were they to cease to act zealously
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in support of measures, which his Majesty is bound, by ties so strong, and so sacred, to endeavour to transmit, not only in full force, but in perfect safety to the remotest posterity. The present servants of the publick are not the men who will unhinge, and derange the system of government in Church, and in State, by improvidently repealing the Corporation and Test Acts. And I am disposed to believe, that those who may become their successors, whatever they may judge it proper to do now that the good things of office are found to distance them more and more every day, will not, when power shall be committed to them, try to move from under our glorious constitution, that rock on which it has stood for ages---by joining in the cry of those who are clamorous, not because they are aggrieved, but because they are desirous of aggrandising themselves at the expence of the friends of the establishment.

With regard to the two Houses of Parliament, the enemies of the church need expect but little favour from them. In the one, there are hereditary titles, and privileges, which would be endangered by the success of a body of men who are notoriously hostile, not merely to the nobles, but also to Kings from whom the titles of the nobles have been derived, and by whom their privileges must be defended. In the other there are, com-

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paratively speaking, very few titles. But there are in it a great many most valuable privileges; the safety of which, in common with that of every thing connected with the civil constitution, depends upon the due maintenance of the rights of the church; and these rights seem to me, upon recollecting the fate of the last application of the Dissenters for a repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, as if they would always find, in the lower House, fully as many advocates as the friends of the establishment ought to desire. To these considerations add, that a very powerful majority as well in the one House, as in the other, are episcopalians; and, that while those who are episcopalians act with a becoming reverence for the Church of England, those who are presbyterians are not likely to be unmindful of the interests of the Kirk of Scotland: upon the whole, that there is good reason to trust, that both Englishmen, and Scotchmen, will proceed as if they were impressed with proper notions of the high moment of the provisions of that solemn, fundamental measure---the Treaty of Union between South, and North Britain; by which episcopacy is ensured to the one country, and presbytery to the other. Why, indeed, should any one be apprehensive of either the English, or the Scotch members of Parliament, proceeding otherwise than I have supposed?

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The former must be aware, that the Church was long ago doomed to destruction by the leading sectaries---the Prices and the Priestleys: the latter cannot be ignorant of the peril to which the Kirk is exposed---since those violent, and indiscriminating levellers have openly pronounced, that *all* ecclesiastical establishments are "pernicious and "detestable:" and, both the former, and the latter would do well to keep this fact in mind, That the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts is not more the present object of the sects, than what they have called "the thorough purging, and reformation" (they now use the mararoni term *regenerating*) "of the Parliament itself."

With regard to the great body of the nation, I know that they now think, and have no doubt but that they will long, very long, continue to think of the Tests, as moderate and wise men did in the days of Dean Swift, "That it is beneath the policy "of the commonest gardener to cut down the only "hedge that shelters from the north."

Where then is the Non-conformist to drop the anchor of his hope---since neither sovereigns, nor their ministers; since neither the peers, nor the representatives of the people---nor yet the people themselves; are likely to assist in promoting his views? nay, since it is highly probable, that all of

these will endeavour both separately, and jointly, to thwart and obstruct his views? It would seem, that, cut off from the prospect of obtaining what he foolishly calls the greatest of blessings, his chief wisdom will consist in enjoying as quietly, and as contentedly as possible, those with which he is already favoured, and which the mildest and best of governments is willing to secure for him.

In the year 1788, the first centenary of the ascertainment of the people's rights, his Majesty, happy in the tranquillity of all his dominions; happy in the advancement of general prosperity at home, and in the ascendancy of British importance and glory abroad; happy, in short, in every thing but what regarded himself, his Majesty, that year, had the additional joy of receiving assurances of fidelity to his benign government, and of attachment to his sacred person, from the Nonjurors of Scotland—long the eager, infatuated opposers of the family of Brunswick. And is it destined, that, as conformity to the will of the legislature increases in one quarter, it shall decrease in another? Is there any law natural, or social, by which the tide of disaffection is constrained to rise in the same proportion to the southward, in which it has subsided to the northward? These things can hardly be. And I have not despaired of beholding a time, in which even the most zealous sectaries will admit, that
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those who, by applying religious tests to civil purposes, either in courts of law, or in churches, contribute to the permanency of an excellent form of government, and, consequently, to the enjoyments of many reasonable creatures, perform their duty in a manner entirely consistent with the scope of the Christian doctrines.

Upon the whole, when I consider, that, were the legislature to be deluded into a compliance with the wishes of those who have long stood in array against the establishment, many mischiefs would accrue not only to the principles of Christianity, but also to the practice of morality; and, that the constitution both of the Church, and of the State, would be exposed to vices which could not fail of first producing the decline, and then of accelerating the destruction of the empire; I am fully prepared to pronounce, **THAT THE CORPORATION AND TEST ACTS OUGHT NOT TO BE REPEALED.** Viewing the repeal of them simply as it may affect the Church, it appears to be a great evil—being something that partakes largely of the nature of sacrilege. But, contemplating it as it may operate upon the State, as well as upon the Church, it seems a two-fold evil extraordinary at once in its bulk, and in its turpitude—being then somewhat partaking, in an alarming degree, of the nature both of sacrilege, and of parricide.

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